

SHORT PAPERS
FOR
SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH;
WITH
A FEW PRAYERS.

COMPILED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS

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PREFATORY NOTE.

As the title page indicates, the following SHORT PAPERS are compilations The English works which seemed best fitted to assist "Seekers after Truth" in their search, have been consulted, and extracts made Little more has been done by the compiler than to link them together by some remarks The reader has thus placed before him, in brief compass, what eminent men have thought on several important points

Some of the "Papers" have been issued separately, others will be found in the *Indian Student's Manual*, but generally they have been revised and enlarged It is also more convenient to have them together

From want of space, subjects are treated very imperfectly The reader is earnestly recommended to obtain and study the works mentioned in different Papers, and of which a summary is given on the last page of the wrapper

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SHORT PAPERS

FOL.

SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH.

I.—IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION.

ABOUT three hundred years ago, a young man came to a distinguished University in Europe to study law. His long-cherished desire was at last gratified. He possessed considerable talents, and commenced his studies with bright hopes.

Soon afterwards, the student called on a good old man, who devoted his life to the benefit of the people among whom he lived. The young man told him that he had come to the University on account of its great fame, and that he intended to spare no pains or labour to get through his studies as quickly as possible.

The good old man listened with great patience and then said —

"Well, and when you have got through your course of studies, what do you mean to do?"

"Then I shall take my degree," answered the young man.

"And then?" asked his venerable friend.

"And then," continued the youth, "I shall have a number of difficult questions to manage, shall catch people's notice by my eloquence, my zeal, my learning, my acuteness, and gain a great reputation."

"And then?" repeated the good man.

"And then," replied the young student, "why there cannot be a question I shall be promoted to some high office. Besides, I shall make money and grow rich."

"And then?" continued the old man.

"And then," added the young lawyer, "then I shall be comfortably and honourably settled in wealth and dignity."

"And then?" asked his friend.

"And then," said the youth, "and then—and then—then I shall die."

Hear the good old man raised his voice "AND WHAT THEN?" Whereupon the young man made no answer, but cast down his head, and went away. The last "And then" had, like lightning, pierced his soul, and he could not get rid of it. The student, instead of devoting his life to the pursuit of the pleasures and honours of this world, sought to promote the glory of God and the good of his country.

There is a Latin proverb, "Look to the end." Do not deceive yourself. Follow out every plan and purpose to its ultimate termination and inquire, "What then?" Do not rest in uncertainties. Watch the end. See to it that that end be blessedness and peace.

An end will come—youth and beauty, mirth and joy, fame and honour, wealth and pomp, life and health, time and opportunity, all must pass away, and "What then?"

After the joys of earth,
After its songs of mirth,
After its hours of light,
After its dreams so bright,—
What then?

Only an empty name,
Only a weary frame,
Only a ceaseless smart,
Only an aching heart

After this empty name,
After this weary frame,
After this conscious smart,
After this aching heart,—
What then?

Only a sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
Only a silent bed
With the forgotten dead,

After this sad farewell
 To a world loved too well
 After this silent bed
 With the forgotten dead —
 What then?
 Oh, then—the judgment thine!
 Oh, then—the last hope gone!
 Oh, then—the day of wrath!
 Oh, then—the second death!

The search for happiness in earthly things has been well compared to the pursuit of the *mirage*. A traveller over a trackless waste of burning sand, is tormented by thirst. Suddenly he sees before him a large lake, its banks are fringed with groves of palms, and it is studded with islets of refreshing green. Encouraged by the prospect, he presses forward, eager to quench his thirst. But the lake recedes as he approaches it. Again and again does he advance, but again and again does the object retire, until at length, utterly exhausted, he sinks in despair on the sand, discovering that he has been chasing the mirage of the desert.

But though the pleasures of this world are deceptive, there is a fountain of living water which can quench man's thirst.

Tennyson has inscribed one of his finest poems, "In Memoriam," to Arthur H. Hallam, son of the historian. This gifted young man was suddenly removed by death. The following was found among his papers —

"Lord, I have viewed this world over, in which Thou hast set me. I have tried how this and that thing will fit my spirit, and the design of my creation, and can find nothing on which to rest, for nothing here doth itself rest, but such things as please me for a while in some degree, vanish and flee away as shadows from before me. Lo! I come to Thee—the Eternal Being—the Spring of Life—the Centre of Rest—the Stay of the Creation—the Fulness of all things. I join myself to Thee, with Thee I will lead my life and spend my days, with whom I am to dwell for ever, expecting, when my little time is over, to be taken up into Thine own eternity."

Even for this life, the influence of true religion is most important as a restraint against vice.

A Roman poet, a profligate, says with great truth. "I see and approve of better things, but I follow those that are worse" So, alas! it is with multitudes Men, generally speaking, know what is right, but they yield to the temptation to do wrong What they require is a motive powerful enough to enable them to resist

There are several considerations prompting to virtuous conduct A desire to please parents and other relations often exercises a beneficial influence, the ruinous consequences of immorality are another check, the still small voice of conscience, until it is silenced by repeated neglect, protests against a life of sin But all these motives, while valuable in their place, are of themselves insufficient There are some vices so common in India, that they meet with no reprobation from public opinion There is also the hope of concealment,—"No eye shall see me" Besides, sensual indulgence at last renders a man incapable of resistance. He will pursue his downward course in spite of every argument or entreaty.

Of all the motives which can be brought to bear upon man, religion is the highest and most enduring Other considerations affect time, this reaches to eternity To realize continually the presence of God our Heavenly Father, is a most powerful safeguard against sin We can go to Him in all our trials and temptations, we can hear Him saying to us, "Son, thou art ever with me, I will never leave thee, continue thou in my love"

Religion is frequently the only source of true consolation

Man needs a religion In youth, in the time of prosperity, the thoughts of God, of death and a future state, may be distasteful, and the world may be considered sufficient to satisfy the desires But a change will take place in all The dark clouds of affliction will overcast the sky, wealth may take to itself wings and fly away, the coveted office may not be gained, health, the absence of which embitters every earthly

pleasure, may be broken, loved ones may be removed by death, and, sooner or later, the inexorable summons will reach ourselves.

Under trials like the above, our dearest earthly friends will prove "miserable comforters, physicians of no value." But true religion can support us under the most trying circumstances and cast a gleam of light across the dark river of death.

Seek religion now. Ponder the solemn question asked by the great Teacher "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Shall this life of mine be wasted?

Shall this vineyard lie untended?

Shall true joy pass by untried,

And this soul remain unfilled?

Shall the God-given hours be scattered

Like the leaves upon the plain?

Shall the blossoms lie unwatered

By the drops of heavenly rain?

Shall this heart still spend its treasures

On the things that fade and die?

Shall it court the hollow pleasures

Of bewildering vanity?

Shall these feet of mine, delaying,

Still in ways of sin be found,

Braving snares, and madly straying

On the world's bewitching ground?

No, I was not born to trifle

Life away in dreams or sin!

No, I must not, dare not stifle

Longings such as these within

Swiftly moving, upward, onward,

Let my soul in faith be borne!

Calmly gazing, skyward, sunward,

Let my eye unshrinking turn!

Then no longer idly dreaming,

Shall I fling my years away,

But, each precious hour redeeming,

Wait for the eternal day!

II.—THE SEARCH AFTER RELIGIOUS TRUTH

Persons who have no fixed religious opinions are fond of quoting Pope's lines —

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right"

A more recent form of expressing the same sentiment is, "we want *life*, not *dogmas*" It is true that it is disgusting to see a man who holds the purest and noblest religious creed, but who is selfish and inconsistent in his conduct That man's religion is vain On the other hand, the life of a man who entertains false religious opinions on vital points, cannot possibly be right He may, indeed, be benevolent and respectable as a citizen; but, take his conduct as a whole, view him with regard to God as well as man, and his life *must be wrong* The assertion, "It is no matter what a man believes, if his life is right," is just as true as it would be to say, "It is no matter whether we take poison or food, provided we are healthy" It is not all the same whether you believe the truth or believe a lie It exerts a considerable influence upon your conduct, and it is your duty most earnestly to search, What is truth?

All truth is valuable in its place, but right belief is of importance in proportion to the greatness of the object to which it relates Of all truth, religious truth is, therefore, of the utmost consequence

Religious Indifference—Many persons are absorbed with the present, and take no thought of the future endless state of existence to which they may, at any moment, be summoned The folly of such conduct is thus shown by Pascal, a distinguished French writer —

"I know not who has sent me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am All that I know is that I must soon die, but what I know least of all is this death which I cannot escape

"As I know not whence I come, so neither know I

whether I go I only know that on leaving this world, I fall for ever into nothingness, or into the hands of an angry God, without knowing whether of these two conditions is to be my lot for eternity Behold my state, full of misery, of weakness, of darkness! And from all this I conclude that I am to pass all the days of my life without caring to inquire what is to befall me Perhaps I might find some enlightenment in my doubts, but I will not take the trouble, or lift my foot to seek it And then, treating with contempt those who shall burden themselves with this care, I shall go, without foresight and without fear, to try so great an issue, and allow myself to be led softly to death, in uncertainty of the eternity of my future condition ”

Wrong Modes of Search —There are some persons who, when they inquire into a religion, take up some isolated points, and confining their attention to them, demand an explanation, or they reject the whole system In deciding a moral question, however, it is necessary to investigate the evidence on both sides While there may be difficulties, perhaps inexplicable, on one side, there may be still greater difficulties on the other

In judging of a man's character, we do not consider simply one or two actions , we look more to the whole tenor of his life Buddhists point to the evil in the world, and therefore deny the existence of a Creator Most men, however, while admitting the existence of evil to be above our comprehension, consider that the proofs on the other side are so numerous and powerful, that they believe in a Creator

It is not unusual for an inquirer into Christianity to begin with an examination of the doctrine of the Trinity He says, “ Explain this or I must reject the religion , I cannot believe what I do not understand ” The creed of the man who does not believe what he does not understand, must be exceedingly short “ Hume himself,” says Goldwin Smith, “ emphatically speaks of the world as a mystery ” We cannot explain how a blade of grass grows beneath our feet , we can-

not explain ourselves, we are infinitely less able to explain the nature of God.

There is nothing deep without mystery. Sir William Hamilton has remarked, "No difficulty emerges in Theology which had not previously emerged in Philosophy." John Stuart Mill says, "The Christian religion is open to no objection, either moral or intellectual, which do not apply at least equally to the common theory of Deism."

Another hindrance in arriving at religious truth is a wrong idea of the evidence to be expected. It is a proposition in geometry, that the angles contained in any triangle, are together equal to two right angles. This is established by reasoning which commands the assent of every person who understands the statement of the process. But many truths are incapable of demonstration like mathematical problems. Suppose a proof should be demanded that there was such a man as Alexander the Great. "A variety of facts are adduced in evidence, which separately rest on different authorities, and some of which have more and some have less weight, when taken by themselves, but all together, they prove that such a person did exist beyond a question, though not beyond the conceivable possibility that the contrary should be true. This is probable, or moral, reasoning. From the nature of the case, a given amount of moral evidence may produce very different degrees of conviction in the minds of different persons."

In the search after religious truth, several qualifications are necessary. The absence of any of them will defeat the aim.

Earnestness—There are some men who although not quite indifferent to religion, show no earnest spirit of inquiry, and are content to remain perpetual doubters.

Suppose you saw a farmer sitting quietly in his house with folded hands, in the midst of seed-time. You ask him why he is not busy in his fields. The

reply is, that he has not yet determined what kind of grain is best adapted to his soil. Suppose you knew a man who all his life was in doubt what profession to choose. You would surely think that these men had lost their senses. But far greater is the folly of the man who is content to remain without settled views about religion.

Earnestness is necessary to success even in common life. It is only the earnest student who gains University honours, it is only the diligent man who becomes rich. Much more is earnestness needful in religion. The royal Hebrew moralist said that wisdom will be found, "if thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures." A greater than Solomon gave the warning, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter, and shall not be able." This implies a diligent use of the means of arriving at the truth. mere wishing is not enough.

Humility—One of the besetting sins of the present day is intellectual pride. Such a spirit is very unfavourable to religious inquiry. "A scorner seeketh wisdom and findeth it not." "The meek will God teach his way." Jesus Christ said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." The Bible, however, does not forbid careful examination. The Apostle Paul writes, "I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say." But there must be a humble, teachable spirit.

Prayerfulness—Last century a young man went to a celebrated preacher in London, saying that his mind was sorely perplexed with some things in the Bible which he could not understand. "Before I hear your difficulties," said the preacher, "let me ask you one thing, did you take them in humble prayer to God before you came to me?" With a natural shame, the young man confessed that he had not. "Then," replied the preacher, "I must decline to help you. Prayer is one of the first duties of natural religion;

and he who lives in neglect of that must not expect to solve the difficulties of a religion that is revealed ”

Dr Kay, formerly of Calcutta, gave the following advice to intelligent Hindus —

“ You and all your countrymen who are worth listening to on such a subject, acknowledge that spiritual light and the knowledge of God must come from Himself, the one Supreme The Mussulmans say the same , and we Christians, above all others, affirm it Then if you are really in earnest, if you are honest, you see what you must do You must go and endeavour to pray thus *O all-wise, all-merciful God and Father, pour the bright beams of Thy light into my soul, and guide me into Thy eternal truth* ”

Acting up to the Light possessed, or Obeying Conscience —This is a rule of the utmost consequence. The life we lead has a great effect upon our belief Suppose a man wishes to follow the bent of his passions, he will unconsciously try to persuade himself that there is no future state, or at least that he will be dealt with very leniently Belief may be similarly affected by other feelings, even when persons lead moral lives Man is naturally proud , he has an aversion to spiritual truth , he may therefore fail to see facts which stare him in the face, or he may draw conclusions which are grossly incorrect The great Teacher says, “ This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil ” “ How can ye believe who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only ? ”

Some further explanation may be given of what is here urged You believe that there is only one God Your conscience tells you that He must be a benevolent holy Being You acknowledge Him to be your Father in heaven If so, He justly claims a Father’s love and respect A dutiful child loves an earthly father , he goes to him with all his wants and difficulties , he follows his guidance , he avoids what-

ever would be displeasing to him. Do you act in this way toward your heavenly Father? Do you live as in His constant presence? Do you love to make known your wants to Him in prayer? Do you seek to please Him in all things?

The above is a *condition of success* in the search. Without it, all else is vain.

Possible Trials.—Sir William Muir, addressing some Calcutta students, thus warned them of some of the difficulties they would meet in seeking to arrive at religious truth —

"I am well aware that in the search you will probably have to pass through a land of doubt and darkness. The ancient landmarks to which you have been used to look up as the beacons that would guide you all your life through, may perhaps vanish from your sight, and you will be left to grope for your way in perplexity and doubt, and yet, I can only wish for all of you that you may enter into it, if haply thereby you may emerge into a better light than you now possess."

"To any who may endure this experience, and find themselves enveloped in thick darkness, not knowing where to turn, I would offer two admonitions by way of caution:

"However dark and confused the elements may be about you, hold firmly by those grand principles of morality and virtue which are inculcated upon you here. Under the pretext of liberty, of advanced thought, and of an enlightened faith, the temptation will come to you of latitudinarian Ethics and a lax code of Morals. Reject the temptation, it is but a meretricious blandishment, a Syren smile alluring you to ruin. Reject every proposal that would confound the eternal obligations of Right and Wrong, of Virtue and Vice. Use hardness as good soldiers practise self-denial. And thus, however dark the night, you will at least be saved from sinking in the quagmire of materialism and sensuality."

"But this is not enough. A higher help is needed,

and in your darkest hour a Friend is near at hand ready to help

"I remember a very good and very learned man telling me that, in a season of illness, the idea of the existence of all created things passed away from him, his mind became blank, there was nothing he could lay hold of Yes, there was one idea left, it was that of his Maker as his father To this he clung, and his poor dark mind had peace and rest

"And so do you, my dear young friends If you enter a land of doubt and thick darkness,—tho' very ground sinking beneath your feet, the staff on which you had leant, and hoped to lean safely all your life crumbling in your hand,—remember that He, your God and Father, is near to you, not impassive or unmindful of you; but ready to afford you aid, if you will duly seek it He has told us that He is 'nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth' Remember this condition, it must be '*in truth*' that you seek His aid, with the earnest and sincere resolve to follow His guidance whithersoever it will lead you

"When you walk in darkness, and there is no light, make him your refuge Thus will light spring up Peace will return You will again walk on sure and firm ground—aye, far surer and firmer than any ground you ever trod upon before ""

In the following Papers on Religious Truth, an effort is made to begin with first principles, which commend themselves to the judgment of all enlightened men The conclusions to be drawn from them, and the course of conduct which they indicate, are afterwards considered.

* See Prayers in Appendix for Earnestness in Religion and for Light

FATHER, LEAD ON!

My Father God, lead on !
 Calmly I follow where Thy guiding hand
 Directs my steps I would not trembling stand,
 Thongh all before the way
 Is dark as night I stay
 My soul on Thee, and say
 Father, I trust Thy love, lead on

Just as Thou wilt lead on !
 For I am as a child, and know not how
 To tread the starless path whose windings now
 Lie hid from mortal ken
 Although I know not when
 Sweet day will dawn again,
 Father, I wait Thy will lead on

I ask not why lead on !
 Mislead Thou caust not Though through days of grief
 And nights of anguish, pangs without relief,
 Or fears that would o'erthrow
 My faith, Thou bidst me go,
 Thy changeless love, I know,
 Father, my soul will keep lead on

With Thee is light lead on !
 When dark and chill at eve the night-mists fall,
 O'erhanging all things like a dismal pall,
 The gloom, with dawn, hath fled ,
 So, though 'mid shades I tread,
 The dayspring o'er my head,
 Father, from Thee shall break lead on

Thy way is peace lead on !
 Made heir of all things, I were yet unblest
 Didst Thou not dwell with me and make me rest
 Beneath the bleeding wing
 That Thou dost o'er me fling,
 Till Thou Thyself shalt bring,
 Father, my spirit home lead on

Thou givest strength lead on !
 I cannot sink while Thy right hand upholds,
 Nor comfort lack while Thy kind arm enfolds
 Through all my soul I feel
 A healing influence steal,
 While at Thy feet I kneel,
 Father, in lowly trust lead on

"Twill soon be o'er lead on !
 Lest all behind, earth's heart-aches then shall seem
 E'en as the memories of a vanished dream,
 And when of griefs and tears
 The golden fruit appears,
 Amid the eternal years,
 Father, all thanks be Thine ! Lead on !

RAY PALMER.

III — THE EXISTENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The existence of God lies at the foundation of religion. To attain certainty on this point is one of the first duties of a seeker after truth.

Atheism incapable of Proof.—An atheist (from *a*, without, and *theos*, god) is one who denies the existence of God. The folly of such an assertion is thus shewn by Foster, the English Essayist —

"I will imagine only one case more, on which you would emphatically express your compassion, though for one of the most daring beings in creation,—a *contemner of God*, who explodes his laws by denying his existence. Surely, the creature that thus lifts his voice was not as yesterday a little child, that would tremble and cry out at the approach of a diminutive reptile ?

"But, indeed, it is heroism no longer, if he know that there is no God. The wonder then turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence which can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for this attainment ! This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity, by which even he would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not

know what is so, that which is so may be God If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes all other Divine existence by being Deity himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist But he must know that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection and acts accordingly”

Agnosticism—A few men still call themselves atheists Foster has shown that to deny the existence of God, requires the assertor to be at once omnipresent and omniscient Unbelievers, of intelligence, now profess only *agnosticism* This word (from *a*, without, and *gnōsis*, knowledge) implies with some that no proof has been hitherto adduced sufficient to warrant their belief in the existence of God Practically, they are atheists They live as if there was no God, and didn’t care whether there was one or not Generally, however, agnosticism denotes the belief that God is *unknowable*, and therefore we need not trouble ourselves about Him

It is perfectly true that we cannot understand God fully “Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know?”

It is admitted that God is *unknowable* to us in His essence, or the nature of His being Our own essence is incomprehensible even to ourselves. But God is *knowable*, to some extent, in His *character*, and our *duty to Him*

The sovereign of a mighty empire, pre-eminent for

wisdom, may have a child two years old. Though the child is incapable of understanding his father's government, he can know him, love him, and obey him as far as his faculties permit. So may we with God.

As has been well remarked, "The real contention of the agnostics, however it may be disguised, is that *any* knowledge of God is impossible, and that there is nothing in heaven or earth unknown to their philosophy." They think that no one can acquire any knowledge which they do not possess. And not only so. They practically claim to have measured the power of the *Unknowable*. Even savages may communicate with each other, but according to the agnostics, the Unknowable cannot reveal His will to man.

PROOFS OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.—A few of these will now be stated.

1. **The Need of a Great First Cause.**—The agnostic Herbert Spencer says, "The existence of a first cause of the universe is a necessity of thought."

If ever there had been no existence, there would be no existence still. Nothing cannot make something. Hence, *something has always existed*. That which is unconscious and unintelligent cannot will, and cannot act intelligently. Unconscious and unintelligent particles of matter could never arrange themselves into a universe so wonderful as the present. That which has not life cannot give life, that which cannot think cannot form beings with reason. The eternal self-existent First Cause must, therefore, be conscious and intelligent. The acts of a mind prove the existence of a mind, and a mind proves a person.

There is therefore a Self-existent, Eternal, Personal Being, whom wise men reverence and call God.

When it is said that God made all things, it is sometimes asked, Who made God? This is thought to be a proof that there is no Creator. The folly of such an argument can easily be shown by taking a similar case. A person says that a watch must have been

made by some wise man An objector asks, Who made the man? Therefore the watch had no maker!

Buddhists consider that beings are formed by merit and demerit This does not explain the origin of things Creatures must have existed and acted before there could be merit and demerit As well might it be said that a hen was produced from its own egg

Row says, "I have heard it urged, that we must give an account of the origin of this first cause But if this first cause could be conceived of as itself caused, it would cease to be a first cause , and so we should have to give an account of the origin of this cause, and then of its cause, until we arrived at a first cause, which is itself uncaused "

2 The Argument from Design—Wherever we see order and means intended to accomplish some end, we are certain that they must have originated in the action of an intelligent being.

If on landing on an island, apparently desert and uninhabited, mathematical figures were seen traced on the sand, it would at once be inferred that some person had been there the figures could not have come by chance Suppose that on exploring the island further we found a palace, without a human being, but completely furnished with every necessary for the want of man what would be the conclusion? "Every house is builded by some man "

We know that stones, mortar, wood, and iron, without life or reason, could not have arranged themselves into a house We are certain, therefore, that the house must have had an intelligent builder. In like manner, we know that the world must have had a wise and powerful Creator

Cicero, a celebrated Roman writer, says " If a concourse of atoms can make a world, why not a porch, a temple, a house, a city, which are works of less labour and difficulty?"

In a fine building, each stone is made of a particu-

lar shape to suit its future position Chemistry tells us, that the whole universe is composed of atoms so excessively small that they cannot be seen It further shows that each atom is, as it were, cast in a fixed mould, so that it will unite with others only in certain proportions The very atoms, therefore, afford irresistible proof that they were fashioned by the great Architect of nature.

The reader may have seen a Chubb-lock The lock itself is very curious, and only one key will open it Can it be imagined that a Chubb-lock and key were formed by blind chance? But there are combinations in nature infinitely more wonderful Only one or two can be noticed

"The adjustments of the eye," says Row, "are of the most complicated character Scientific men, when they describe them, are at a loss for language to express their admiration of them Sight is the result of the combined action of its various parts If any one of them had been different from what it is, sight would have been either impossible or imperfect But, further, by their modification, the power of sight is adapted to the particular circumstances of each order of animal The ear is perhaps a more marvellous example of such combinations even than the eye, wonderful as it is To render the hearing of articulate sounds possible, two complicated organs are necessary, each of which is separate from the other, viz., the ear itself and that marvellously complicated instrument, the mouth, composed of the throat, the larynx and the lungs, which by their combined action produce the human voice Each of these consists of a number of parts of the most complicated delicacy, which are mutually adapted to each other, and if in any particular point the adjustment failed, the result would be marred But what I ask you specially to observe is, that not only have each of the parts of these separate organs to be adjusted together, but unless the two organs were mutually adjusted, that is to say, the ear and the organs which form the voice were precisely fitted to each other, hearing would be impossible Nor is this all In this particular case, the ear and the vocal power would exist in vain, unless the atmospheric air had been nicely adjusted to both Ask yourselves whether it is believable that such an effect can have resulted from the action of the blind forces of nature, unguided by intelligence But the whole animal frame consists of a combination of similar adaptations of the

most marvellous complexity, all nicely adjusted to themselves and to the entire organism, and in numbers passing all comprehension. Can we refuse to refer them to the action of an intelligence adequate to have produced them?"*

If a Designing Mind is denied, we are driven to the absurdity of supposing that all the wonderful arrangements in Nature are the result of chance. As well might the origin of the Ramayana be ascribed to shaking a large number of letters out of a bag, which grouped themselves into verses, the admiration of the world.

Young, an English poet, asks —

" Has matter more than motion ? Has it thought,
Judgment, and genius ? Is it deeply learned
In mathematics ? Has it made such Laws,
Which, but to guess, a Newton made immortal ?
If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
And that with greater far than human skill,
Resides not in each block, a Godhead reigns "

The word *Nature* is sometimes used to express a power, but to deny a personal agent. A disbeliever in the existence of God was once asked how all things around us were produced. He replied, " By Nature." The question was then put, " What is Nature ?" The answer was " All around us " So then " All around us produced all around us ! "

Evolution is also given as an explanation. By this is meant that all plants and animals that have ever lived on the earth have come from one simple form into which life was first breathed. Whether this is true or false, it does not supersede the necessity of a Creator. It makes no difference whether He acts in Nature every moment or at once contrived and executed His own part in the plan of the world.

Design does not cease to be design, because the Designer, instead of directly framing plants and animals,

* Paley's *Natural Theology* contains many wonderful illustrations of design in nature. A copy may be obtained at the Depository of the Madras or Bombay Tract Society for 8 annas.

made the material in such a way and with such skill as to enable it in the course of ages to run itself, so to speak, into a myriad shapes of life and beauty

Paley shows that if a watch were so constructed that it would produce other watches, this, instead of proving that it had no maker, would only enhance the idea of his skill. Such an arrangement could not have been devised by unconscious matter. In like manner, children are not born through the wisdom of their parents.

3 The general Consent of Mankind —It is true that in all ages of the world there have been some who have denied the existence of God, but compared with those who acknowledge it, they form a very small minority. Although Buddhism is atheistic, or rather agnostic, the bulk of its professors, when asked, confess that there must be a Creator. Cicero says, "There is no people so wild and savage as not to have believed in a God, even if they have been unacquainted with His nature." "This belief," says Fleming, "can be traced back to the remotest times. And it has nowhere disappeared. So that it may be said that *all men, in all ages and in all places*, have had some knowledge and belief of God."

The opinions of some of the greatest men that have ever lived may be given.

Socrates, the wisest of the Greeks, has an interesting dialogue in support of this truth. Aristotle, a profound Greek philosopher, says, "Although invisible to every mortal nature, God is yet manifested by His works."

Sir Isaac Newton has been called the "Prince of Mathematicians." His Latin treatise, *Principia*, treating of the grand law by which the heavenly bodies are regulated in their movements, is considered the greatest work of the kind which has ever appeared. His conclusion is as follows —

"This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and

comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being”

Sir William Thomson is one of the most distinguished scientific men of the present day. It was through him that the electric telegraph cable was laid across the Atlantic. Addressing some of the most learned men in Europe, he said —

“Overpowering proof of intelligence and benevolent design lies around us, and if even perplexities whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us, through Nature, the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend upon the ever-acting Creator and Ruler”

4 The Testimony of Conscience — We all know the difference between right and wrong. There is something within us which says, You ought, It is your duty to do this, It is your duty to forbear from doing that. If we fail to comply with its commands, it condemns us, and we feel that we deserve punishment.

This moral faculty is called *Conscience*. It speaks to man of a being in the universe who is the punisher of evil and the rewarder of virtue. This being can be none other than the Creator of the universe. He must be both a moral and a personal being, the being in whom all obligation centres, and the Author of that moral law which conscience pronounces to be right and good *

Several other arguments might be adduced, but the foregoing, by themselves, are overwhelming. Their strength is to be measured, not by each separately, but by their combined force.

It may be asked, if the evidence is so convincing, why do some men continue atheists?

One great difference between a bad and a good lawyer is, that the former cannot grasp the whole of a case. He dwells upon one small point, while he over-

* Abridged from Row *On the Existence and Character of God, Present Day Tracts*, No V. This may be obtained, post free, for 2½ annas, from the Superintendent, Tract Depôt, Madras.

looks the most convincing arguments on the other side. So it is with many atheists

One objection to the existence of a Creator is that some are born blind or lame. Let this argument be tested. Two men are looking at a house in an uninhabited island. One says, "See that window, it is dark, and will not allow the light to pass through." Then, again, one of the pillars of the verandah is crooked. This house cannot have been built by any one." The other replies, "True, it may have these defects, and why they exist, I do not know. Still, I am certain that the house had a builder." So is it with the house of the body, though an eye may sometimes be blind or a limb crooked.

The argument amounts to this. Whatever we think defective cannot have a Creator. We are much less able to judge of God's wisdom and goodness in creation than a young child is able to criticise a railway engine or a steam-ship.

"It is a fine observation of Plato in his *Laws*," says Fleming, "that atheism is a disease of the soul before it becomes an error of the understanding." The characteristics of the advocates of "free-thought" are pride and self-conceit. All who differ from them are complacently set down as either knaves or fools. There is no earnest inquiry among them. If they were true "seekers after God," they would, in the end, certainly find Him. As a rule, they take up their opinions hastily, and then try only to gather materials for scoffing.

Coleridge thus describes atheism —

The owl Atheism,
Sailing on obscene wings across the moon,
Drops his blue-fringed lids and shuts them close,
And, hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven,
Cries out, "Where is it?"

While the study of works like those of Paley is strongly recommended, the Rev W Miller, of Madras,

mentions in his Lectures,* a shorter method of being convinced of the existence of God — .

"Let a man devote his life to the highest ends he knows of—let him seek to express the highest ideal he can form a notion of in his own actual everyday deeds and words —let him fail, as he will fail too often, and then seek amid the shame of failure for strength to do what he aims at doing and become what he ought to be —let him learn thus, as he will learn, that there is a something beyond himself that aids him in strivings after good, and disapproves when his strivings cease such a man will have more conviction of the being of a God within a month than attention to the most valid arguments will awaken within him in the course of years "

Pantheism —This (from *pan*, all, *theos*, God) denotes that the universe, taken as a whole, is God Many Hindus hold this creed

Traces of pantheism are to be found in the Vedas, but the Upanishads form its chief basis Veda Vyasa is the reputed author of the Vedanta philosophy. Sankaracharya, who lived about the eighth century, A.D., was its great propagator The *Vedanta Sāra*, is its most popular exposition

"The Soul and God are one (*jīvabrahmātīyam*) This is the scope of all Vedanta treatises," says the *Vedanta Sāra*, § 15

God is frequently called "The one without a second, (*ekam evāditiyam*)" Keshab Chandra Sen used this as denoting the unity of God, but its true meaning is pantheistic

Space does not admit an examination of this system One of its "great sentences" is, *Aham Brahma*, I am God Gaudapurnananda well remarks —

"Thou art verily rised, O thou animal soul, of thy understanding, by this dark theory of Maya, because like a maniac, thou constantly ravest, 'I am Brahma' Where is thy divinity, thy sovereignty, thy omniscience? O thou animal soul; thou art as different from Brahman as is a mustard seed from Mount Meru "†

* *Lectures to Educated Hindus* Sent post free from the Tract Depôt, Madras, to any address in India for 2 annas

† Quoted in Banerjea's *Dialogues on Hindu Philosophy*, p 378

For a refutation of the system, see Dr Murray Mitchell's *Letters to Indian Youth on the Evidences of Christianity*.^{*} Tennyson's opinion is quoted from *In Memoriam* —

That each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Re-emerging in the general Soul,
Is faith as vague as all unsweet
Eternal form shall still divide
The eternal soul from all beside

Dr Mitchell justly concludes with the remark : “Even the fearful assertion ‘there is no God’ is less shocking, than for a frail, guilty, miserable man to say, ‘I am God’ ”

Polytheism — This (from *poly*, many, *theos*, god) denotes belief in many gods. Hindus generally combine pantheism and polytheism. They hold that God is essentially one, but that He is to be worshipped through an endless diversity of forms.

The Attributes of God — These will only be briefly noticed at present. In succeeding Papers they will be considered more fully.

A building enables us to judge of the wisdom and skill of the architect. In like manner, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handywork”

Milton, one of the most celebrated English poets, has a noble hymn to the Creator, beginning with the words —

These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, Thine, this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair, Thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sittest above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen,
In these Thy lowest works, yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine

It must be allowed that the evidences of God's goodness are not so apparent as those of His power

*A copy will be forwarded from the Tract Depôt, Madras, post-
-, for six annas

and *wisdom*. Nature has two aspects. As a rule, every thing is calculated to minister to our happiness. The sun with its cheerful light, fields of waving grain, trees with pleasant fruits, flowers with their beautiful colours and sweet perfumes, all proclaim the benevolence of God. There are, however, exceptional occurrences, as earthquakes and pestilences, which sometimes cause wide-spread suffering and death. Wise men, after a full consideration of both sides, are convinced that the arguments in favour of God's goodness greatly preponderate. Most of the misery that is in the world is brought upon people by their own misconduct. It is part of God's chastisement to lead them to a better course. We are also incapable of understanding all God's government of the world. He has designs far beyond our limited knowledge.

Another attribute of God is His *holiness*. What is the character we admire most? Is it not the man who is free from every taint of pride and revenge? who is pure, truthful, just, and benevolent? Our consciences at once confirm this judgment. Can it be supposed that the great Creator does not Himself possess the virtues which we sometimes esteem in His creatures? Our instincts tell us that He must have them all in boundless perfection. The excellencies which we see in the best men on earth are like reflections of the glorious sun from little fragments of a mirror.

Pope thus describes some gods which have been worshipped —

"Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were Rage, Revenge, or Lust"

Any professedly sacred books whose gods are of such a character, must be the inventions of wicked men. The excuse is sometimes made that the gods are above all law, and can act as they please. This is comparing them to human tyrants, who take delight

in gratifying their sinful passions A good king would not act in such a way—much less God

The ignorant suppose that there are many gods, some dwelling in one place, some in another On the other hand, the *unity* of God has been acknowledged by the most intelligent men in all ages He is not like a man, confined to one place , He possesses illimitable knowledge and power , there is no proof of the existence of more than one God, and no other is required.

The foregoing conclusions are drawn chiefly from our own consciences and an examination of what we see around us But God has given a clearer revelation of Himself in the Bible

Newton says, “It is not enough for us to regard God as a being, eternal, infinite, absolute , nay, it is not enough for us to admire Him as the wise and beneficent builder of the universe , we must fall down before Him as our *Lord and Sovereign* ”

The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim
Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display ,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And, nightly to the listening earth,
Repeats the story of her birth ,
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ?
What though no real voice, nor sound,
Amidst their radiant orbs be found ?

In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
 And utter forth a glorious voice,
 For ever singing, as they shine,
 "The hand that made us is divine"*

IV —DUTY TO GOD

In the preceding Paper, the existence and attributes of God have been briefly noticed Our duty to Him will now be considered This is greatly neglected Many, who are just and kind to their fellow-men, forget God entirely, or content themselves with a few cold acknowledgments What would be thought of a son who was affectionate to his brothers and sisters, but slighted a wise and kind father, though living in his house and receiving from him every thing he had?

Plato says, "It should never be thought that there is any branch of human virtue of greater importance than piety towards the Deity" Cicero remarks, "Piety is the foundation of all virtues" When Jesus Christ was asked, which is the great commandment? He replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind This is the first and great commandment"

Some of God's claims to our obedience and love will now be mentioned others will be explained subsequently

1 *God is our Father by Creation* —This truth was acknowledged in very early times The oldest form of worship among the Aryans, was, when gazing up to the blue sky and stretching forth their hands, they exclaimed, *Dyaus pitar*, Heaven-Father! The Greek term *Zeus pater*, and the Latin *Jupiter*, had the same original meaning Plato speaks of God as "Father

* This hymn is by Addison, author of the best papers in *The Spectator* His style is remarkable for its excellency Dr Johnson says, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison"

and Maker of all" The Apostle Paul, when addressing the Athenians, referred to certain Greek poets as saying, "For we are also His offspring" Jesus Christ taught His followers to address God in prayer as, "Our Father which art in heaven" God is our Preserver as well as our Creator "In Him we live, and move, and have our being" We are dependent upon Him every moment for the support of the life which He first bestowed

2 *God is our King* —The universe is His by creation, and He is its rightful Lord Fresh obligations are thus laid upon us

The following are some of the great *duties* we owe to God in consequence of the above relationships

1 *Allegiance* —Rebellion against the sovereign is considered the greatest crime in a state, and is visited with the severest punishment The command is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" It is high treason against God to bow down to an idol, or to worship any other than Himself No wish to please the dearest earthly relatives will be accepted as an excuse

Some educated Hindus deny the charge of idolatry; they pretend that the images are simply to remind people of God Rammohun Roy says that this excuse was learned from Europeans and thus shows its falsity

"Whatever Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hand, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called *Pran Pratishta*, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers"

The life which by one ceremony has been brought into the idol, can by another ceremony be taken out

The excuse is made that the poor and ignorant need ges to remind them of God They cannot understand His form for He has none. They can remember

their parents when far distant, they can love a benefactor whom they have never seen, they can obey the authority of a Queen-Empress though she never set foot on their soil. They can worship God who is a Spirit in spirit and in truth. Idols are a hindrance—not a help to true worship. They give most degrading ideas of God. Would a father be pleased if a son kept a toad to remind him of his father in his absence?

Christians and Muhammadans, far more numerous than the Hindus, can think of God without idols why should they be necessary in India?

2 *Reverence*—Respect is shown to a father by every right-minded son. Great honour is paid to a monarch in his palace. Much more is reverence due to the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Wicked men, conscious of their guilt, often *dread* God, but this is not the feeling that is inculcated. Reverence is a sense of God's greatness, mixed with love.

Reverence will be shown in the way we speak of God. Many persons insult Him to His face by using His name lightly. Such conduct is highly blameworthy. God expressly declares that He will "not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

3 *Worship*—This includes *prayer* and *praise*. Fleming says, "In all ages and among all nations, it has been common, by some form or rite, to supplicate Divine protection and favour." Among the golden verses of Pythagoras we find the following—

" In all thou dost, first let thy prayers ascend,
And to the gods thy labours first command,
From them implore success, and hope a prosperous end "

As children go to an earthly parent in all their troubles, so may we make known our wants to our heavenly Father. We may seek protection in danger, wisdom to guide us, pardon for sin, and strength to resist temptation.

We thank a friend who shows us a kindness. God is continually showering down blessings upon us.

Under such circumstances, praise is "comely" An ancient philosopher said, "If I were a nightingale, I would by singing fulfil the vocation of a nightingale But since I am a reasonable being, mine is to praise God This is my calling I will fulfil it"

Worship may be private, social, or public. Each form has its advantages, each is a duty

An Indian proverb shows one important effect of worship—*yatha devah, tatha bhaktah*, as is the God, such is the worshipper If we associate with the wicked, we are apt to become like them, while intercourse with good men has a beneficial influence This applies equally to worship

4 *Obedience*—A little child should be guided by the commands of a wise father If it disregarded his instructions and followed its own wishes, the consequences would be very injurious to itself In a kingdom, the laws must be observed, anarchy and misery would be the result were each person to act as he pleased It is consummate folly in men to disobey God "It is for the finite to set itself against the infinite, the feeble and imperfect to declare itself independent of the perfect, the impure and unholy to exalt itself against the holy, the creature of a day to declare itself more wise and worthy to rule than the august Being whose goings forth are from eternity"

Our relations to God demand obedience "His breath woke us first into existence Whatever powers of body or of mind we possess, all are His and of Him Nothing pertaining to us can we properly call our own From the first moment of existence to the last, we exercise no faculty of thought or feeling or action, which He has not given us, and which He does not lightly claim as belonging to Himself The very power to *disobey* is a power which He has Himself conferred."

The nature of God's requirements is a further argument for obedience His commands are not arbitrary, but "holy, just, and good." He enjoins only that

which is best for ourselves, He forbids only that which it is our highest wisdom to shun Our duty and our happiness coincide

5. *Love*—This one word is the “fulfilling of the law” All our duties may be summed up in love to God and love to man. Without this, every thing else is of little worth No earthly parent would be satisfied, if his child obeyed him merely like a servant for his wages, or like a slave from fear of punishment God asks our love His address to us is, “Son, give Me thine heart”

Some of the ways in which love manifests itself will be noticed

(1) We wish to be near those we love An affectionate child delights in his father’s society If obliged to leave him, he laments the separation, and desires to return So should we feel towards God David says, “My soul thirsteth for Thee” And we may continually realise a sense of His presence. He is indeed always with us The Psalmist says, “Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thoughts afar off Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways” If we truly love God, we shall rejoice at this, and live continually as in His sight. We should strive to “walk with God.”

(2) We delight to converse with those we love Can we conceive of a son, living in his father’s house and constantly in his sight, yet never speaking to him, or saying only a few heartless words at distant intervals? Such conduct would show that he was entirely destitute of filial affection God is ever near us We speak to him in prayer. If we love Him, it will be a pleasure to tell Him all our sorrows, to seek His guidance, and to thank Him for His goodness

(3) We seek to please those we love. If we are attached to a friend, we try to avoid whatever will grieve him, and seek to do what will give him pleasure Thus it will be with us if we love God. Be-

fore doing anything, we shall think how God will regard it, and act accordingly His laws will be our guide Obedience is a great test of love Jesus Christ says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments"

6 *Trust*—An affectionate child has confidence in his father He will go with him anywhere even in the dark night , he will take a bitter medicine from him, convinced that it is for his good There are things in this world which the wisest cannot understand Mansel says, "Against this immovable barrier of the existence of evil, the waves of philosophy have dashed themselves unceasingly since the birthday of human thought, and have retired broken and powerless, without displacing the minutest fragment of the stubborn rock, without softening one feature of its dark and rugged surface " We must often be content to say for the present, " I know not, God knoweth " All will yet be made plain God says, " What I do thou knowest not now , but thou shalt know hereafter "

7 *Imitation*—Children frequently resemble their parents in outward looks , they catch the tone of their voice , they often copy them in their conduct Even the best earthly parents have their faults, but we are safe in following the example of our heavenly Father Plato makes "likeness to God" the final aim of man Jesus Christ says, " Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect "

The idea, held by most Hindus, of " absorption" into the Deity is a great error, but it is our highest duty and privilege to become " partakers of the Divine nature," to be like God, to have our will swallowed up in His Thus we shall, in some faint measure, share in the Divine happiness

The following hymn, expressive of gratitude to God for His mercies, is, like the one at the end of the last Paper, by Addison.

When all Thy mercies, O my God !
 My rising soul surveys,
 Transported with the view, I'm lost
 In wonder, love, and praise

O how shall words, with equal warmth,
 The gratitude declare
 That glows within my ravish'd heart !
 But Thou canst read it there

Thy Providence my life sustained,
 And all my wants rediest,
 When in the silent womb I lay,
 And hung upon the breast

To all my weak complaints and cries
 Thy mercy lent an ear,
 Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learned
 To form themselves in prayer

Unnumbered comforts to my soul
 Thy tender care bestowed,
 Before my infant heart conceived
 From whom these comforts flowed

When in the slippery paths of youth
 With heedless steps I ran ,
 Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe,
 And led me up to man

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
 It gently cleared my way ,
 And through the pleasing snares of vice,
 More to be feared than they

When worn with sickness, oft hast Thou
 With health renewed my face ,
 And, when in sins and sorrows sunk,
 Revived my soul with grace

Thy bounteous hand with worldly bliss
 Hath made my cup run o'er ,
 And, in a kind and faithful friend,
 Hath doubled all my store

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
 My daily thanks employ ,
 Nor is the least a cheerful heart,
 That tastes these gifts with joy

Through every period of my life
 Thy goodness I'll proclaim ,
 And after death, in distant worlds,
 Resume the glorious theme

When nature fails, and day and night
 Divide Thy works no more,
 My ever grateful heart, O Lord,
 Thy mercy shall adore

Through all eternity to Thee
 A joyful song I'll raise,
 For, oh ! eternity's too short
 To utter all Thy praise

V.—MAN'S HEART IN GOD'S SIGHT

The opinions which people entertain of their own religious and moral character are often very mistaken. Formerly there was a class of professional murderers in India, called Thugs. They would accost a traveller, pretending to be very friendly, but when they came to a solitary place, they would suddenly strangle him, take all his property, and bury the corpse. They would then kindle a fire near the grave, and feast as heartily and sing as merrily as if they had committed an act of the greatest merit. Their conscience was, as it were, seared with a hot iron.

Take another case, not so extreme. A merchant has a large stock of grain during a famine. Regardless of the sufferings of the poor, he sells even the sweepings of his granaries at the utmost price he can realize. The merchant may regard his conduct as unexceptionable. He may consider that he is only asking the market value of his goods. Others, however, will justly regard him as selfish and hard-hearted.

Persons of a very different character may next be noticed. There are some men who are naturally amiable. They are affectionate to their relatives, kind to their friends, liberal to the poor. Free from envy, they rejoice in the prosperity of all around them. Temperate, chaste, honest, and truthful, their moral conduct seems blameless. Most people regard such as perfect.

Only very few, it is true, attain to the standard mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The great bulk of mankind think that all is well if they do no positive harm to any one, and are kind to the poor. They consider themselves safe, because they think that they are no worse than others. They may admit that they are not in all things what they ought to be; but God is merciful, and they need be under no alarm about their future state.

We are naturally biased in our own favour. Actions which we at once blame in others, we often commit ourselves without scruple, or we quiet our conscience with some paltry excuse. Our own good opinion does not prove that our conduct is right or our condition safe. We may be saying to ourselves, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

But while most men pass through life satisfied with themselves and unaware of their real character, there have been some, in all ages of the world, who have felt the corruption of their nature, and sighed after holiness. The writings of ancient Greek and Roman philosophers contain numerous testimonies to this fact. There is a remarkable confession of sin which Brahmins ought to repeat daily.

Papóham pápikurumahim papitmá pípasambhavaha

The meaning is I am sin, I commit sin my soul is sinful, I am conceived in sin. This is very similar to the account of man's state given in the Bible. David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." It is also written, "There is none righteous, no, not one", "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?"

Professor Newman puts into the soul's lips the following confession —

"Slay me, O God, if Thou wilt, I deserve it. I am miserable, but leave me not thus. Put me to shame; I am shameful. Behold, I hide nothing. Thou art

light, expose my darkness I will not palliate I am worse than I know Show me all that I am I cannot help myself If I must die, I will die in Thy sight"

Why is it that the holiest men are the first to admit their own sinfulness? Most people take their neighbours as their standard, and are satisfied if they think that they come up to their conduct Some, indeed, compare themselves with persons guilty of flagrant crimes, and are proud of their supposed moral superiority On the other hand, a man whose conscience is enlightened, judges himself by God's law.

Our whole duty is summed up in two precepts. The "first and great commandment," supreme love to God, was noticed in the previous Paper

The second commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" It is explained by the words, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" So greatly has this precept been admired, that it has been called the *golden rule*

Some men confine the idea of sin to theft, adultery, and other crimes punishable by the State It is true that to *wish* to take anything belonging to another is theft in God's sight "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" Still, Christianity does not say that all men are thieves and adulterers in the ordinary sense of these terms Nor is it asserted that all men are wicked in every respect But obedience to one set of laws will not save a man from the punishment of another set which he violates If a clerk defrauds Government, he will not be pardoned because he is temperate or chaste A soldier guilty of rebellion against the State, is not acquitted because he has been kind to the poor A person who breaks one of God's commands because he is inclined to do so, would equally break another if similarly tempted

It is a common mistake to confound amiability with holiness. Some dogs are savage, others are mild in their disposition Men vary similarly It is no more

merit for a man to obey his instincts without reference to God's will, than for a sheep to be gentle

The two great sins chargeable against every human being are *ungodliness* and *selfishness*

The verdict pronounced upon Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" The prophet Daniel explained the grounds of this judgment when he said, "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified" When conscience awakes, we see nothing in the past but a career of guilt—the grand purpose of our lives neglected, the great God treated with indifference, His holy law trampled under foot God contrasts the gratitude of the very beasts with the regardlessness of man "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider"

Until man's heart has been renewed, he not only *forgets* God, but *hates* Him An enemy, it is true, is not hated when he is forgotten, but the feeling is instantly awakened when he is seen or remembered Thus it is with regard to God Prayer is a burden, the thought of God is disliked, and the mind turns with pleasure to earthly things

Who can say that he has loved his neighbour as himself? If we fail to do this, we are selfish To the extent to which we fail, we are selfish

It is impossible to tell whether a garment is clean or dirty by examining it in a dark room. To judge properly, it should be taken out in the sun. Somewhat in like manner, if we would ascertain our true condition, we must view ourselves, as it were, in the dazzling splendour of God's presence A holy man of old said to God, "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance" Another confessed, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" A

third said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"

The above confessions express the true state of man's heart in God's sight. And it has been well remarked, "What thou art in the sight of God, that thou truly art"

It is of the utmost importance for us to understand our real spiritual condition. The Great Teacher says, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Until a man feels that he is sinful, he will not strive to obtain pardon and purity. "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." Let one of our prayers daily be, "O God, show me myself"

An appropriate confession will be found in the Appendix.

"Oppressed with sin and woe,
A burdened heart I bear,
Opposed by many a mighty foe,
But I will not despair

With this polluted heart
I dare to come to Thee,
Holy and mighty as Thou art,
For Thou wilt pardon me

I feel that I am weak,
And prone to every sin,
But Thou who giv'st to those who seek,
Wilt give me strength within

In my Redeemer's name,
I give myself to Thee,
And, all unworthy as I am,
My God will welcome me"

BROWNE

VI — THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN

Punishment necessary—Our consciences distinguish between right and wrong. We feel also that good conduct deserves approval, and that wrong-

doing should be followed by punishment. A virtuous father commends good behaviour in his children, while he censures the opposite. A just king bestows honours on faithful servants who have risked their lives on his account, but he punishes those who break his laws, and are traitors against his government. All this accords with our natural sense of justice. We should blame a parent who made no difference between his children, whatever might be their conduct, or a king who treated alike loyal adherents and avowed rebels. The consequences of such conduct, too, would be most disastrous. A family under such conditions would be a scene of disorder, a kingdom would become a prey to anarchy.

"Since God," says Fleming, "hath made us capable of discerning between right and wrong, and hath annexed to that discernment a susceptibility of suitable emotions, it is impossible for us to conclude that He himself should remain insensible to the distinction between good and evil. It is natural, therefore, for us to expect that, in the government of the world, God should manifest His love of virtue and hatred of vice, by rewarding the virtuous and by punishing the vicious."

It cannot be supposed that the great Creator and Lord of the universe has a less sense of justice than some of His creatures. The belief is therefore almost universal that God will "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not." An eminent writer on the laws of England remarks, "It is but lost labour to say, 'Do this or avoid that,' unless we also declare 'this shall be the consequence of your non-compliance.'" Laws without penalties would be almost worthless. The ancient Greeks conceived that there was a goddess of vengeance, called Nemesis, who tracked the steps of the sinners, and with dreadful scourges, sooner or later, inflicted punishment. The idea was a shadow of the great truth of a personal and all-seeing Governor of the world.

Retribution in this Life —It is admitted that the consequences which flow from virtue and vice, even in this life, may, to some extent, be viewed as rewards and punishments. The upright and benevolent have generally the esteem of their fellow-men, and, so far, the approval of their own conscience. The spendthrift soon reduces himself to beggary, the sensualist sows the seeds of disease in his frame, the drunkard wastes his property, makes a wreck of his body, clouds his mind, and ruins his family. Still, these consequences do not go so far as our sense of justice leads us to expect. Some of the wisest and best men have endured a life of poverty and suffering, ending in an ignominious death; while villains and oppressors sometimes live in ease and luxury, dying quietly on their beds. We are led to think that things will not be so always.

There are good reasons for the present state of things.

"The righteous and the wicked," says Fleming, "are here so connected and associated with one another, that the one could not be fully punished nor the other fully rewarded. To try and improve the virtues of the one, and to move the repentance and work the reformation of the other, they are allowed, for a season, to grow together, lest in rooting up the one, the other should be destroyed. But still we are at no loss to perceive which is the object of the Divine approbation."

"Had the righteous and the wicked been here punished and rewarded exactly in proportion to their respective character and conduct, we must have concluded that this was the final scene of the Divine administration. But when we learn, on the one hand, from the intimations of conscience and the arrangements of Providence, that the one is the object of the Divine approbation and the other of the Divine condemnation, and when, on the other hand, we see that they are here exposed alike to the trials and vicissitudes of life, we conclude that the present state is a state of discipline and probation, and admirably suited for the purposes of such a state. And while this is the true and correct view of the present life, it furnishes the clearest argument for a future life—where the virtues which have been exercised here shall be perfected and rewarded—where the vices which have been patiently borne with here shall be punished—where all irregularities shall be

corrected, and all inequalities removed—and where every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil ”

Evil of Sin —But while it is generally agreed that the wicked will be punished in a future state, there have been wide differences of opinion with regard to the amount of suffering merited

We are too much interested in the case to give a proper decision If criminals in a jail where asked what punishment should be inflicted upon themselves, the sentences would be very lenient The general tendency is to palliate sin “‘Everybody does it,’ is a constant plea to excuse what is wrong ‘Nobody thinks anything of it,’ is the same sort of plea in a different shape But ‘everybody does it,’ ‘nobody thinks anything of it,’ will not make a wrong thing right ”

Hindus are, especially, apt to have a very inadequate sense of the evil of sin Their own gods are said sometimes to commit sin in sport Its guilt, it is supposed, may be washed away by bathing in the Ganges On the contrary, the one true God is of spotless purity Of sin, He says, “Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate ”

What is sin? God claims to be supreme over the world which he has Himself created, it is essential to the welfare of the universe that he should be supreme Every sin is a defiance of His authority, a declaration on the other part of the sinner, that he will not have God to reign over him. “All the guilt that lies in foul rebellion against the mildest and most merciful of earthly monarchs—in disobeying the kindest, and grieving the best of fathers—in ingratitude to a generous benefactor—, all that evil, multiplied a thousand and a thousand times, there is in sin ”

Suppose a man committed theft, the value of the article stolen has not simply to be considered The evil is that if theft did not involve a penalty, no man’s property would be safe. It is the same with sin A

single violation of God's law with impunity, would tend to spread rebellion through the universe

Future Punishment — Considering the vast interests at stake, the punishment of sin must be severe. The Bible says, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth" "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" The warning of Jesus Christ is, "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"

"We know not," says Mansel, "whether the future punishment of sin will be inflicted by way of natural consequence or of supernatural visitation, whether it will be produced from within or inflicted from without" Conscience will gnaw like an undying worm Milton justly makes Satan say, "myself am hell"

Punishments will differ. Some will be beaten with "many," some with "few stripes." What gives intensity to the suffering, is the absence of hope. There are some who suppose that, after enduring pain in hell, the wicked will eventually be received into heaven. "Men attach, perhaps, some omnipotent power to mere suffering, and imagine that if hatred to sin and love to God are all that is needed, then a short experience of the terrific consequences of a godless past must ensue a godly future. Why do they think so? This is not the effect which mere punishment generally produces on human character. Its tendency is not to soften, but to harden the heart,—to fill it not with love, but with enmity" "Oh, the more we think of it, the darker does the history grow,—the faster does the descent of the evil spirit become, down that pit which, from its very nature, seems to be bottomless" * There is every reason to fear that the sinner will go on sinning, and an eternity of sin involves an eternity of punishment

* Dr Norman Macleod.

Objections — “ Future punishment of the offences of this life,” says Archbishop Sumner, “ is supposed to be incompatible with the goodness of God, who created man under circumstances of such tremendous responsibility. But is it not a fact, that numberless cases appear before us daily, incompatible with the abstract idea of Divine goodness which we should be inclined to form ? I do not see the eternal world and therefore I may deny that misery, as the result of misconduct in this earthly state, will exist there So if I did not see the present world, I might deny that pain and sorrow, and the many physical evils which abound, could exist in the work of an omnipotent Creator But I should be mistaken And so those may be mistaken, who, on no better grounds than *a priori* reasoning, promise themselves impunity in the world to come We must frame our notions in conformity with what we see, rather than what we might imagine And surely the person who looks abroad into the natural world will find much to surprise him, much that is inconsistent with the views of philosophical perfection which he would fondly desire to entertain Whatever ground he may take, short of absolute atheism, he will be unable to account for many phenomena of the world around him Atheism, on the other hand, would involve him in far greater perplexities

“ If, then, it is a difficulty, which I am very willing to concede it is, to understand why God should have to create moral agents liable to the consequences of misemployed free agency, it is not a single or solitary instance of difficulty , it is only one of the many inexplicable circumstances connected with the present state of mankind ” But there is a clue out of the difficulty, which will be noticed in a future Paper

Danger is neither averted nor postponed by being overlooked.

“ When the ostrich,” says Guthrie, ” scouring along the sandy desert, finds that it cannot escape the huntsman, it is said to thrust its head into a bush, and remain there, quite

tranquil, to receive the death-blow Poor, senseless, stupid bird, it seems to fancy that the danger which it ceases to see has ceased to exist But men, as well as brutes, do so, and not by one degree more rational than the composure of a bird at whose folly they themselves would be the first to smile, is the peace of those who, that they may enjoy the pleasure of sin, shut their eyes to its evil, and refuse to look that, and their own danger, in the face "

WHAT SHALL THE HARVEST BE?

" Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap "

Sowing the seed by the dawn light fair,
 Sowing the seed by the noon day glare,
 Sowing the seed by the fading light,
 Sowing the seed in the solemn night
 Oh, what shall the harvest be?
 Oh, what shall the harvest be?

Sown in the darkness or sown in the light,
 Sown in our weakness or sown in our might,
 Gathered in time or eternity,
 Sure, ah sure, will the harvest be?

Sowing the seed by the wayside high,
 Sowing the seed on the rocks to die,
 Sowing the seed where the thorns will spoil,
 Sowing the seed in the fertile soil
 Oh, what will the harvest be?

Sowing the seed of a lingering pain,
 Sowing the seed of a maddened brain,
 Sowing the seed of a tarnished name,
 Sowing the seed of eternal shame
 Oh, what shall the harvest be?

Sowing the seed with an aching heart,
 Sowing the seed while the tear-drops start,
 Sowing in hope till the reapers come
 Gladly to gather the harvest home
 Oh, what shall the harvest be?

ANON

VII —NEED OF A REVELATION.

In the foregoing Papers, the existence and attributes of God, with our duty to Him, as taught by our own consciences and an attentive examination of nature, have been considered. Though the conclusions may be readily admitted, the following remarks must be borne in mind "There are many things," says Locke, "which we have been brought up in the belief of from our cradles, and which are notions familiar and as it were natural to us under the Gospel, which we take for unquestionable truths, and easily demonstrable, without considering how long we might have been in doubt or ignorant of them, had revelation been silent." The best proof of this is afforded by the state of the world without Christianity

India and China are the two most enlightened countries in Asia. Both have had men powerful in intellect, and indefatigable in their investigations. What are the results? Most of the learned in India do not believe in the existence of one God, but that *all is God*. Among the masses, the grossest polytheism prevails, the number of deities being said to be thirty-three crores. One of their own proverbs shows the state of things among the Chinese their gods are said to be "as numerous as the sands of the Havy River."

With the religious feeling characterising the Hindus, few are likely to accept atheism. The educated classes must either become simple Theists, or embrace Christianity. The choice lies between the two.

Any system commended to them through flattery and supported by imposture, will be so short-lived as to be unworthy of consideration.

By "simple Theism" is meant belief in a personal God, but a denial of revelation in the proper sense of the term. The only doctrines accepted are those supposed to be discovered by the light of nature and reason. No book is received as the infallible word of God.

Before proceeding farther, the terms Intuition and Revelation may be defined

Intuition means a looking upon or into, insight. It denotes the power of the mind by which it immediately perceives the truth of things without reasoning. *Revelation* means unveiling, making known. The former denotes the effort of the human mind to acquire religious truth, the latter the revealing of religious truth by God to man.

It is undoubtedly true that Theism is a great advance upon Hinduism. Idolatry and the worship of impure deities are repudiated, while the "Fatherhood of God" is proclaimed, caste is denounced, and the "Brotherhood of man" is acknowledged. Still, it falls far short of the necessities of the case, it does not teach enough to satisfy the wants of man. History and the present state of the world prove, that without a written revelation, men are uncertain about some of the most important truths of religion.

Points doubtful without Revelation —A few of these will be noticed.

1 Apart from revelation, we stand in doubt of the *immortality of the soul*. We ask with anxiety, will the soul perish with the body in which it lives, or is it an undying principle whose existence is for ever and ever? Nature, it is true, gives some expectation of a future state, but the evidence, taken by itself, is dim and indecisive.

Socrates, the wisest of the Greek philosophers, when dying, said to his friends "I am going out of the world, and you are to continue in it, but which of us has the better part is a secret to every one but God." Cicero, the great Roman orator, devoted much attention to the arguments for the immortality of the soul. He summed up the whole in the following words "Of these opinions—the immortality, or eternal death, of the soul—which is the true one, God alone knows, and which is most probable, a very great question."

From the light which men have borrowed from revelation even when they have professedly rejected it, there is less doubt now among them than formerly about the immortality of the soul. Still, there are serious differences of opinion. Parker looked upon a future state as certain, Newman says with regard to it, "Confidence there is none, hopeful aspiration is the highest state."

2. The *efficacy of prayer* is left undecided. An instinct, it is true, prompts us to prayer. It "mounts of itself to young lips that can scarce lisp the name of God, and to dying lips which have no longer the power to pronounce it." Still, its value has been questioned. Some suppose that God has left the world entirely to the government of fixed laws, and that prayer addressed to Him no more avails than it would if a steam-engine were invoked.

3. Without revelation we have no certainty about the *forgiveness of sin*. Conscience tells every man who carefully examines his life, that he has broken God's laws times without number. From one point of view, God may be regarded as a merciful Father, who will pardon His repentant children. But He is our King as well as our Father. It has been asked, "Is the subject to rebel and disobey every hour and the King by a perpetual act of indulgence to efface every character of truth and dignity from his government? Do this, and you depose the legislator from his throne. You reduce the sanction of his law to a name and a mockery?"

When we are in good health and prosperous, we may rest satisfied with a vague trust in the mercy of God, but on a death-bed, when we feel that we are about to stand before the great Judge of the universe, we ask with trembling anxiety whether God Himself has given any assurance that sin can be forgiven.

Boyd thus points out the defectiveness of mere natural religion —

"To what end is the abstract knowledge of God, if I am shut out from Him by sin? To what purpose an abstract con-

viction of a futurity, if I know nothing of its nature, its inhabitants, its features? To what purpose a correct moral code, if I find myself perpetually breaking it, and ignorant how I am to be pardoned for the transgression? To what purpose a law, if I know nothing of any spiritual power, which can make me love it, and, at least, long to keep it? The dark past of sin and omission, of neglect and rebellion, lies heavily on my conscience, and I can neither undo it nor atone for it. The solemn future presses on my apprehension, and I know not what it is, or, if it be happy, how I shall be qualified to enjoy its happiness. Intuition! canst thou satisfy my doubts? Speak! Alas, the oracle is silent! The bitter cry is again and again uttered, and 'there is neither voice nor answer, nor any that regardeth'!"

Failures apart from Revelation—The different branches of the Brahma Samaj in India are now simply repeating an experiment which has been made by some of the greatest men that ever lived, and admitted to have been a failure, viz to solve the great problems of humanity apart from revelation.

For acuteness, for depth, for enthusiasm, the ancient Greek mind was pre-eminent. The Romans stood next to the Greeks, and in some qualities were even superior. The results are thus described by Cowper —

" In vain they pushed enquiry to the birth
 And spring-time of the world, ask'd whence is man?
 Why form'd at all? and wherefore as he is?
 Where must he find his Maker? with what rites
 Adore him? will He hear, accept, and bless?
 Or does He sit regardless of His works?
 Has man within him an immortal seed?
 Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
 His ashes, where? and in what weal or woe?
 Knots worthy of solution, which alone,
 A deity could solve. Their answers, vague
 And all at random, fabulons and dark,
 Left them as dark themselves. Their rules of life,
 Defective and unsanctioned, proved too weak
 To bind the roving appetite, and lead
 Blind nature to a God not yet revealed "

The final consequence was universal scepticism, attended with almost incredible profligacy

The most thoughtful deeply felt the need of a revelation. Socrates dissuaded Alcibiades from offering the customary sacrifices till some teacher should come from on high. Plato has the following remarks —

" To discever the certain truth abeut these things, (i e, the immortality ef the soul, &c) is, in this life, either impossibl or most difficult Still, to fail ef diligenty inquiring into them, or to stop shert before we have carried the inquiry as far as we can, would be the mark of a mest igneble spirit We must then by all means do one er other ef twe thungs Either we must learn(from others), or find eut, the truth , er, if that be impossible, then we must take the best and surest of human reasonings and embarking on that, as en a frail raft, sail ever life's perilous ocean, unless one were able te perferm the voyage with mere certainty and less danger upon some surer mede of transpert, such as a *Divine Revelation*"

A dying philosopher thus bewailed his condition " Polluted, I entered the world , anxiously, have I lived , in great alarm, I depart Cause of causes, have pity on me "

Apart from reyelation, man is left in the condition described by Tennyson —

" What am I ?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a ery "

Bacon says, " Sacred theology must be drawn from the Word of God, not from the light of nature or the dictates of reason Not only does this hold good in those great mysteries of the Deity, of the creation, of the redemption, but appertains also to the moral law interpreted For it must be confessed, that great part of the moral law is of that perfection whereunto the light of nature cannot aspire "

Locke shows that, " Many are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage, too, to the truths revelation has discovered But it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we

had the first knowledge of them from thence and in that clear evidence we now possess them" Even if the moral precepts of the Gospel could be collected from the writings of Confucius, Manu, Socrates, and others, they would want authority Locke says, "What would this amount to, towards being a steady rule, a certain transcript of a law that we are under? Mankind might hearken to it or reject it, as they pleased, or as it suited their interest, passions, principles, or humours they were under no obligation, the opinion of this or that philosopher was of no authority"

The Brahma Samaj —The Rev. T. E. Slater, in his interesting work, *Keshab Chandra Sen and the Brahma Samaj*,⁷ thus points out some of the reasons why this Theistic movement cannot be regarded as the "permanent form of religious faith in which India will rest"

The theistic truths held by the Brahmins have been in the world from the beginning There is nothing new in them Mere theism can never form a new religion

No form of natural theism has ever been the religion of any race or country Polytheism, pantheism, and atheism, have always proved stronger and more influential than mere theism Only when allied with revelation has theism been able to cope with its foes "Theism," says Drummond, "is the easiest of all religions to get, but the most difficult to keep Individuals have kept it, but nations never"

So long as the Brahmos cling to the uncertain basis of intuition, confirmed though some of them may suppose it to be by personal inspiration and revelation, so long will the Brahmic faith be of a shifting baseless nature and hence the danger, as time goes on, of its being split up into fragments, through the uncontrolled imagination and self assertion of individualism, and through want of some objective basis on which the whole body may cohere

Mr Slater shows the "Insufficiency of Brahminism" in several important respects, which can be better explained in a succeeding Paper

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on,
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on,
Keop Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant sceneo , one step enough for me

I was not ever thus, nor prayed, that Thou
Shouldst lead me on,
I loved to choose and see my path , but now
Lead Thou me on !
I lovod the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will Remember not past years !

So long Thy Power has blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torront, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have lovod long since, and lost awhile !

J H NEWMAN

VIII.—THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

The *need* of a revelation has been shown It is undeniable that God can make known His will to man. To question this would be to suppose God to be weaker than His own creatures, who can communicate their thoughts to one another Further, it may be argued that a Divine revelation is highly probable All civilised nations of the present time profess to have sacred books Though these differ widely, they bear testimony to the general expectation of mankind

To gain knowledge of any kind involves labour Much careful inquiry and a long course of preparation are necessary before a man can be settled in life. He has to consider for what employment he is best fitted, and how he may obtain the requisite training It is reasonable to suppose, that our welfare, not for a few short years but for eternity, will demand still more earnest investigation

Four great Religions — There are four great religions of the world claiming to have written revelations,—Hinduism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, and Christianity. Some knowledge of these different systems is desirable.

Most Hindus are acquainted, more or less, with the creed of their country. No educated man can believe in its seas of sugar-cane juice, ghee, and curds. Nor can the pantheism of the Upanishads be received.

Though Buddhism rejects caste, in many other respects it is liable to the same difficulties as Hinduism. It is a most cheerless system. When a devout Buddhist tells his beads, he mutters, *Anitya, Dukha, Anatta*, "Transience, Sorrow, Unreality." All existence is considered a curse, and his great aim is to escape from the sufferings of life into *Nirvana*, or annihilation. The grand objection to Buddhism is its practical atheism.

Muhammadanism has taken some great truths from the Bible, but its sensuality betrays its earthly origin.

The reader will find a good examination of Hinduism and Muhammadanism in Dr Murray Mitchell's *Letters to Indian Youth*, already noticed. Space does not here permit them to be considered in detail.

The three religions above mentioned exist only among semi-civilised races. They are abandoned with growing knowledge. The Bible is the sole revelation accepted by the enlightened nations of the earth.

The Bible often misrepresented — It is to be regretted that often the only knowledge of the Bible possessed by educated Hindus is derived from gross misrepresentations in "freethought" journals. One may be given as a specimen. A theosophist lately alleged that the statement in the Bible could not be true that Herod the Tetrarch put to death 4,000 children in Bethlehem. The Romans were strict with their governors, and would not have allowed it. The above number of male children, two years old and under, would represent a city with about 80,000 inhabitants,

whereas Bethlehem was noted for its smallness. The prophet Micah referred to it as "little among the thousands of Judah." How many children were put to death is not mentioned in the Bible, but it was certainly nearer 40 than 4,000. Again, the massacre did not take place in the time of Herod the *Tetrarch*, but during the life-time of his father, Herod the *King*, who was not under a Roman governor.

By far the most satisfactory course is for "seekers after truth" to get the Bible and read it for themselves. English New Testaments and Bibles will be supplied to them from the Bible Depository, Memorial Hall, Madras, at the very cheap rates given below.* It may be explained that the New Testament forms the second great division of the Bible.

Literary Merits of the Bible — Even apart from revelation, the Bible deserves careful study. It is one of the oldest books in the world, it has been translated into more languages, been more widely circulated, and has exerted greater influence than any other book.

The mere style of the English Bible is remarkable. *The Saturday Review*, one of the ablest home papers, says, "In this country we all start with a knowledge of a book written in the best style the country can show. The English Bible is a masterpiece of English." Similar testimony is borne by Professor Huxley. When teaching the Bible in schools was considered by the London School Board, he made the following remarks:

"Consider the great historical fact that, for three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English History, that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is familiar to noble and simple from John

		Price.	Postage
* New Testament, small,	...	1½ as	· ½ an
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O'Groat's House to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso were once to the Italians, that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere literary form, and finally that it forbids the veriest hind who ever left his native village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a past stretching back to the farthest limits of the oldest nations of the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the intervals between two eternities, and bears the blessings and curses of all time, according to its effect to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

Sir William Jones says,—“I have regularly and attentively read the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independently of its Divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they have been composed”

“There never was,” says Carlyle, “any book like the Bible, and there never will be such another”

It will be seen that the study of the Bible is advocated even for its pure English and exquisite literary beauties.

There are also so many allusions to the Bible scattered throughout English literature, that no one can thoroughly comprehend it without a good acquaintance with the Scriptures. Bishop Wordsworth has an interesting volume, *Shakespeare's Knowledge and Use of the Bible*, showing his very numerous references to the Bible. A similar work has been prepared with regard to Sir Walter Scott and Tennyson. The remark applies, more or less, to every eminent English writer.

Higher Claims of the Bible—But the Bible has far higher claims to attention

Bacon says, “Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and groves, but I have found Thee

in Thy temples" "There never was found in any age of the world, either philosophy, or sect, or religion, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian faith"

"There are no songs," says Milton, "comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach."

Sir Isaac Newton says, "We account the Holy Scriptures to be the most sublime philosophy"

Locke was asked which was the shortest and surest way for a person to attain a true knowledge of the Christian religion. His reply was, "Let him study the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament, therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."

Selden, called the "Glory of England," says "There is no book upon which we can rest in a dying moment but the Bible"

Sir Walter Scott, a few days before his death, expressed a wish that his son-in-law would read to him "From what book shall I read?" it was asked "Need you ask?" Sir Walter replied "There is but one" It was at once understood that he meant the Bible

The following verses are by the same great writer —

"Within this ample volume lies
The mystery of mysteries,
Happiest they of human race
To whom their God has given grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way,
And better had they ne'er been born,
That read to doubt, or read to scorn"

Coleridge, the poet, says —

"For more than a thousand years the Bible, collectively taken, has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law, in short, with moral and intellectual cultivation, always supporting, and often leading, the way. Good and holy men, and

the best and wisest of mankind, the kingly spirits of history, have borne witness to its influences, and have declared it to be beyond compare the most perfect instrument of humanity”

Contrast the above testimonies from some of the greatest men of modern times with the flippant remarks often made about the Bible by shallow critics by whom it has never been carefully read

Attacks on the Bible —The Bible has been the object of unceasing attack “Assailants have appeared and vanished, each proclaiming, just as he himself went to the bottom, that he had given the Bible its death-blow! Somehow, however, that singular book continues to flourish, to propagate itself, to speak all languages, to intermingle more and more with the literature of all civilised nations”

Disraeli, the great English statesman, expressed the following opinion with regard to the present attacks upon the Bible —

“There is no reason to believe that the Teutonic rebellion of this century against the Divine truths intrusted to the Semites will ultimately meet with more success than the Celtic insurrection of the preceding age. Both have been sustained by the highest intellectual gifts that human nature has ever displayed, but when the tumult subsides the Divine truths are found to be not less prevalent than before, and simply because they are divine. Man brings to the study of the oracles more learning and more criticism than of yore, and it is well that it should be so. The documents will yet bear a greater amount both of erudition and examination than they have received, but the word of God is eternal, and will survive the spheres.”

The opinion of Gladstone might be quoted to the same effect

Structure of the Bible —It is readily admitted that the Bible is not in the form which some persons might expect a revelation to assume. It consists of sixty-six different books, written by forty authors, at different periods of time, over a space of more than fifteen centuries.

Instruction must be suited to the circumstances of the person taught. In the "childhood of the world," truth could be made known only to the extent and in the way in which it could be received. It had to be adapted to the age, not too much in advance of it. Abstract truth does not impress people in a low state of civilization. In the earlier books of the Bible especially, figurative language is largely employed. God is said to have arms, eyes, a heart, and other parts of a human body, to express His power, wisdom, love, and other attributes. He is said to repent, to rejoice, and to be angry; this is a way of speaking as if things affected Him as they do us. He is a shield, a strong tower, and a rock of defence, to show what He is to His people.

The Bible is a faithful record. It describes the faults of good men as well as their virtues. But it does not palliate vice or hold it up to imitation.

In making laws for a people just brought out from slavery, their low moral and spiritual condition had to be considered. Certain evils were tolerated to prevent, in some cases, greater ones. Slavery prevented the massacre of multitudes in war.

In the Bible there is the *Law of Progress*. The Old Testament dispensation was a sterner one than the New. David was a good man, but his standard was far below that of Jesus Christ.

Evidences of Christianity.—The Bible is received by Christians as a revelation of God's will, or it is said to be *inspired*. What is understood by this, need not be discussed at present. It is sufficient that the Bible be regarded as a book deserving of careful study. Nor, at this stage, is an examination of the Evidences of Christianity recommended. They are very voluminous. The following list, abridged from Mansel, includes only some departments of them —

"The genuineness and authenticity of the documents, the judgment and good faith of the writers, the testimony to the actual occurrence of prophecies and miracles, the character

of the Teacher Himself, those rites and ceremonies of the elder Law, so significant as typical of Christ, so strange and meaningless without Him, the predictions of the promised Messiah, the history of the rise and progress of Christianity, and its comparison with that of other religions, the ability or inability of human means to bring about the results which it actually accomplished, its antagonism to the current ideas of the age and country of its origin, its effects as a system on the moral and social condition of subsequent generations of mankind, its fitness to satisfy the wants and console the sufferings of human nature, the character of those by whom it was first promulgated and received, the sufferings which attested the sincerity of their convictions, the mutual contradictions of conflicting theories of unbelief, and the inadequacy of all of them to explain the facts for which they are bound to account."

On each of the above points, and on many of a similar character, elaborate treatises have been written

The force of moral evidence depends largely upon the state of the person by whom it is weighed. No man who is living in known sin can justly expect to arrive at religious truth. The necessity of earnestness, humility, and prayer, has been noticed in a previous Paper.

While there are convincing proofs of the inspiration of the Bible, it must not be supposed that the truth of Christianity turns upon this point. If the account given in the Gospels of Christ and His teaching be true, all that is essential in Christianity is established.

Coleridge said, "Don't talk to me of the Evidences of Christianity — *Try it*" The promise of Jesus Christ is, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself" The best way to judge of Christianity is to follow Coleridge's advice, *Try it*.

Study of the Bible — When near the end of life, Dr Johnson gave the following advice to a young man "Attend to the voice of one who has possessed a certain degree of fame in the world, and who will shortly appear before his Maker read the Bible every day of your life"

The counsel of Dr Johnson is earnestly urged upon every "seeker after truth" The good obtained from the study of the Bible will depend upon its nature If a person, ignorant of geometry, took up Euclid, read a little at one place, then a little at another, skipping backwards and forwards, the result would be worthless John Wesley, a very good and useful man, who lived last century, tells us how to read the Bible :

"I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God, just hovering over the great gulf, till a few moments hence I am no more seen! I drop into an unchangeable eternity!"

"I want to know one thing, the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore God Himself has condescended to teach the way, for this very end He came from heaven He has written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price give me the book of God

"I have it Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men I sit down alone, only God is here In His presence I open, I read His Book, for this end—to find the way to heaven.

"Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark and intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Lights—Lord! is it not Thy Word? Thou hast said 'If any be willing to do Thy will, He shall know' I am willing to do, let me know Thy will. I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God, and then the writings whereby being dead they yet speak"

The Bible read in this way will not be studied in vain The portions which should first be selected will be noticed in another Paper

Dryden, a great English poet, has the following verses on the Divine origin of the Bible —

Whence, but from Heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.

If on the book itself we cast our view,
 Concurrent heathens prove the story true
 The doctrine, miracles, which must convince,
 For Heaven in them appeals to human sense
 And' though they prove not they confirm the cause,
 When what is taught agrees with nature's laws

Therefore the style, majestic and divine,
 It speaks no less than God in every line
 Commanding words, whose force is still the same
 As the first fiat that produced our frame
 All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend,
 Or sense indulg'd has made mankind their friend ,
 This only doctrine does our lusts oppose
 Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows ,
 Cross to our interests, curbing sense and sin,
 Oppress'd without, and undermin'd within
 It thrives through pain , its own tormentors tires,
 And with a stubborn patience still aspires

IX.—JESUS CHRIST.

Liddon says, "No educated man, at least, whatever be his faith or his life, can deny the reality or the greatness of Christ's place in human history. Nothing is more certain in the annals of mankind than this, that Jesus Christ lived in Palestine, and was put to death eighteen centuries and a half ago. The fact belongs to general human knowledge, just as much as does the life of Julius Cæsar, or of Alexander the Great, or of Socrates, or of Mahomet"

Testimonies to Jesus Christ—The following extracts show how Jesus Christ has been regarded by noted men of different opinions and countries

Keshab Chandra Sen says —

"I cherish the profoundest reverence for the character of Jesus, and the lofty ideal of moral truth which he taught and lived"

The closing words of *Shakespeare's* will are these

"I commend my soul into the hands of God, my Creator, hoping and assuredly believing, through the only merits of

Jesus Christ, my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting ”

Goethe, the great German writer, says —

“ I esteem the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendour of a sublimity, proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ, and of as divine kind as was ever manifested upon earth ”

Renan, the brilliant French writer, says —

“ Jesus is in every respect unique, and nothing can be compared with him. This Christ of the Gospels is the most beanteous incarnation of God, in the fairest of forms, viz., moral man—God in man. For long ages yet He is King, His beauty is eternal, His reign shall have no end. So long as one noble heart shall yearn after moral beauty, whilst one lofty soul shall be seized with joyful ecstacy before the realization of the divine, Christ will have worshippers by reason of that part of His being which is truly eternal ”

John Stuart Mill says.—

“ Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left—a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. Who among His disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee—still less the early Christian writers. About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of might which must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in His inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching upon this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity, nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life ”

Carlyle says —

"The tidings of the most important event ever transacted in the world is the life and death of the Divine Man in Judea, at once the symptom and cause of immeasurable changes to all people in the world "

"Jesus of Nazareth, our divinest symbol! Higher has the human thoughts not reached. A symbol of quite perennial, infinite character, whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest "

Lecky, the English historian, thus shows the effects of Christ's life —

"It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world a character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, temperaments, and conditions, has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice, and has exercised so deep an influence, that the simple record of three years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the discussions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists "

Testimonies, like the foregoing, show how deserving the life of Christ is of the most careful study "Not to be interested in the life of Jesus Christ," says Liddon, "is to be, I do not say religious, but unintelligent. It is to be insensible to the nature and claims of the most powerful force that has ever moulded the thought and swayed the destinies of civilized man "

Lives of Christ — "Two apostles, Matthew and John, and two companions of the apostles, Mark and Luke, have written lives of Christ All that is assumed at present is that the writers were honest men, who had good opportunities of seeing or hearing about what they wrote, and were sufficiently intelligent to form reasonable opinions about what they saw and heard "

The reader is recommended to begin with the Gospel of Luke, as it was originally written for a convert to Christianity When it has been carefully read, the other Gospels should be taken up A Bible, with marginal references and maps, is very desirable The former show where the same event is referred to in the

other Gospels, often throwing additional light upon it, the latter give a clearer view of the geography of the country

The Rev T E Slater has the following beautiful sketch of the life of Christ, apart from the supernatural element —

" His figure rises before you among the little hills of Galilee. A Jewish peasant, young, poor, uneducated, the reputed son of a carpenter, emerges from a despised country town. Without the prestige of years, with no authority derived from the learned councils of His nation, with no patronage and security of the civil power, He commences to teach the people. For three short years He wandered through the cities, villages, and roads of Palestine, going about 'doing good,' a figure of sublime simplicity and holy beauty, moving about dignified, calm, and lowly, in all scenes and circles of human life, astonishing the great, perplexing the learned, soothing the sad, helping the needy, ministering to the sick, cheering the outcast, and charming the young, now discussing with Rabbis in the Jewish temple, now riveting the attention of crowds in the synagogue, now mingling with the guests at a marriage feast, now eating with publicans and sinners, now weeping with mourners at a grave, now standing by the bed of sickness, now sitting in the house of a leper, now caressing little children in His arms. Brave as the hardiest warrior, yet tender as the gentlest woman, wise as the profoundest philosopher, and yet simple as the simplest child, He was adapted to all society, to every condition, and to any season. Stately as the grandest monarch, He was yet accessible to all. Dependent for support on friends, and often having not where to lay His head, He yet never paid court to, fawned upon, or flattered, a single man. With truth upon His brow, equity in His eye, love upon His lip, and blessing in His hand, He moved about a strange, powerful, fascinating man. Hypocrites hated Him, the openly profligate feared Him, the down-trodden hoped in Him, the good loved Him. No man ever before was so just, so fearless, so sympathizing. No man before asserted the perfect equality of all men in the sight of God, the equal preciousness of the souls of priest and potentate and outcast sinner. Never was there a nature that took such compassion on unworthiness, that took such account of the weak, the neglected, the despised, the worthless and the wicked. He told all men that God was their universal Father, that He loved them, pitied them, and longed to purify and save them. He insisted, in the name of God, on a perfect morality, on truth and purity in the inward parts, on cleanliness of heart,

on the subjection of self and selfish aims and actions, and a generous love to God and men. He rebuked with inflexible sternness the covetous, the proud, the treacherous, He withered with a look of truth and indignation the hypocritical and cruel, never sparing the highest and most learned class, He spoke words of encouragement and strength to the penitent and humble, and cherished with the kindest touch the feeble germ of right feeling and upward aspiration within the weakest heart. In short, He lived and spake and acted in such a way, that had men yielded to his life, and practised what He taught, and received the priceless blessing of his deeds, sinners everywhere would have become saints, and earth would have become like heaven. Ambition, oppression, fraud, dissension, crime of every kind, and horrid war, would have ceased to be, for all men would have lived and loved as brethren. This was the practical and necessary result of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. A few brave and honest men, daring to be free, and determined to be true, did gather round Him, He simply called them to follow Him, and their hearts bowed to a beauty they could not resist, and their consciences to a power they could not oppose, and they left their worldly avocations, and became His disciples, and in some measure, like Him in their characters, and they went forth to preach the Gospel, and the Christianity that is wide as the world to day has grown out of their humble efforts. But He—their Master and Instructor, their Friend, and the Friend of all men, can we believe it? was, on account of the truth He uttered, the testimony He bore to the loving, righteous character of God, the good He sought to do, ‘taken, and, by wicked hands, crucified and slain’!*

Dr Jardine, formerly of Calcutta, thus draws attention to some characteristic features in the public ministry of Christ, purposely omitted in the foregoing outline! —

“Perhaps the most striking of these features is, the *super-human* character which Jesus assumed. Although He usually called Himself the *Son of man* thus apparently identifying Himself with human life and human interests, yet every where throughout His public life there were continually bursting forth indications of a consciousness that He was not a mere man. In the face of the stormy waves of Gennesareth, He could say with calm dignity ‘Peace, be still.’ Roaring de-

* *God Revealed*, pp 123 6

† *What to Believe*, pp 129 131 Mr Slater treats more fully of the same points, but his remarks are too lengthy for quotation See *God Revealed*, pp 126 142

moniacs, obedient to a word from His mouth, sat down quietly at His feet in their right mind. To the cripple or the paralytic He would say, 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk.' To Lazarus who had been four days in the tomb near Bethany, He spoke with a word of power, 'Lazarus, come forth.' His moral acts were just as superhuman in their character. 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' was a usual sentence of His to the penitent sinners who appeared before Him. Nor was the tone of his teaching inconsistent with the superhuman character of His actions. 'He spoke with authority and not as the scribes,' who were mere expounders of the Mosaic law and traditions of the elders. He did not hesitate to place Himself in a higher position than any of the great teachers who had gone before Him. Nay, He professed to have such a direct communication with God as had never been claimed before, and to be as He called Himself, 'The Light of the World.' Unlike all ordinary human beings, He had no consciousness of sin, not a word can be found amongst all His recorded sayings which conveys the shadow of a suspicion that in his mind there ever appeared the idea of His own personal sinfulness. These features of His life will, I think, satisfy you that He claimed a superhuman character, no ordinary man ever acts or speaks in these ways or makes such claims as these, nay, still farther, I think I may challenge you to point out a single great religious teacher in the whole history of the world who ever combined the features pointed out in this paragraph."

The birth of Jesus Christ was foretold many centuries before He appeared. Immediately after the fall, the promise was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, He was to be descended from Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and the family of David, his birthplace was to be Bethlehem, His mother a virgin, a forerunner was to announce His coming, He was to preach good tidings to the meek, the eyes of the blind were to be opened, and the ears of the deaf to be unstopped, He was to enter Jerusalem as a king, but "lowly, and riding upon an ass," He was to be "rejected," and betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, His hands and feet were to be pierced. But He was not to remain in the grave, He was to ascend on high, and sit at the right hand of God.

The above predictions, and many others, are found in the Old Testament, the latest book of which was

written four centuries before the coming of Christ, and the whole of which was translated into Greek in the third century before Christ.

The only sufficient explanation is that Jesus Christ was God-man—God manifested in man.

The idea of a Divine incarnation is familiar to the Hindus. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, "Whensoever religion fades and irreligion prevails, then I produce myself." The expectation is general in India, that the tenth or Kalki Avatára has yet to come, when Vishnu, on a white horse, will destroy iniquity, and establish righteousness. The great truth, thus perverted, finds its accomplishment in Jesus Christ, the *Nishkalaṅka*, or spotless, Avatára.

The objection may be raised that it is *improbable* that the Son of God would consent to become man, to be reviled, buffeted, and put to death. Baines gives the following reply —

"Men are very incompetent judges of what a Divine Being may be willing to endure. Who should suppose, beforehand, that God would submit to blasphemy and rebuke? Yet what being has been ever more calumniated? Who has been the object of more scorn? What is the daily offering that goes up from the wide world to the Maker of all worlds? There is not a nation that does not daily send up a dense cloud of obscenity and profaneness as its offering. To our minds it is no more strange that the Son of God should have borne reproach and pain with patience for thirty years, than that the God of creation should bear all this from age to age, and as an offering from the wide world."

"Jesus Christ is not merely the Teacher, but the substance of Christianity, not merely the author of the faith which Christians profess, but its central object." The "religion of Christ" means the piety, the submission of thought and heart, the sense of obligation, the voluntary enthusiastic service of which He, together and equally with the Father, is the rightful and everlasting object, which, when He was on earth, He claimed as His due, and which has been rendered to

Him for more than eighteen hundred years by the best and noblest of the human race”

The Trinity — Hiero, king of Sicily, said to Simonides, “what is God?” The philosopher asked a day to consider it. When the king required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more. As he kept constantly desiring double the number which he had required before instead of giving his answer, the king asked his reason. “Because,” replied the sage, “the longer I meditate on it, the more obscure it appears to me.” Our own existence is beyond our comprehension. It is reasonable to suppose that the nature of God is far more mysterious.

The Bible most emphatically asserts the Divine Unity “Hear, O Israel the Lord our God is one Lord,” “the Lord is God, and there is none else,” “God is one.” At the same time, we learn from the Scriptures, that, in the Godhead, there are three Persons of equal eternity, power, and majesty, called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This union of three in one is called the *Trinity*, though the term itself does not occur in the Bible.

There may seem to be a contradiction in saying that God is one and yet three. It may be asked, how can one be three and three one? This objection might be valid if the terms were understood in the same sense in each case. But an illustration will show that a living being may be one in one sense and three in another. Man is a unit, yet he consists of body, soul, and spirit. While the comparison is by no means parallel, and can, in no degree, assist us in comprehending the Trinity, it shows that it does not involve any contradiction.

Again, it should be understood that when Jesus Christ is called the Son of God, the meaning is not that He is a Son born in the ordinary way. This supposition were blasphemy. “It must be evident,” says Archdeacon Pratt, “that the language is figurative, and that that part only of the figure is used (as is

always the case in using emblems) which is suitable to the occasion ”

Dr Jardine has the following remarks on this subject

“ Christ, before He left His disciples, commissioned them to ‘ Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’ thus apparently implying that the Divine nature from which men were to draw their spiritual life and nonrishment is three fold. And accordingly the Christian Church has from the beginning ascribed divine honours and a divine name equally to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

“ Thus far I have stated to you simply and in His own recorded language what Christ has revealed regarding the divine nature and functions. Perhaps you wish to have the relations of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost to one another and to men and to the universe more fully explained and more clearly defined. I scarcely think that it would be wise to attempt this. The objects and relations of the heavenly kingdom are not directly known to us, and indeed are of such a nature that they cannot become directly known to us. And if we attempt to explain or define them, that is, to express them in such terms that we can thoroughly understand them, it is more than likely that we shall simply lead ourselves into difficulties. And there is no reason to suppose that even the revelation which Christ professed to have made is an absolutely accurate or complete manifestation of the invisible. We must remember that this revelation was necessarily brought down to the level of our comprehension, human relations, especially that of father to son, were made use of to illustrate divine relations. But we are sure that nothing merely human can offer an adequate or complete analogy to the divine, and consequently when we are told that there are a Father, and a Son, and a Holy Spirit who from all eternity have been together, and have exercised special functions in the creation, preservation, and salvation of the material and moral universe, we are to think, not that we know the absolute and complete truth, but that the truth has been presented to us in such a form that we can understand as much of it as is needful for us at present. The wonderful mysteries of the invisible kingdom have been clothed in forms suited as far as possible to our human comprehension but still ‘ we see through a glass darkly,’ and we must not delude ourselves with the belief either that we understand them now or ever will understand them thoroughly. However, enough has been revealed regarding the wonderful love of the divine Being, and the ways of His working in the universe, and especially the great work

of the Son and Spirit in effecting human salvation, to inspire us with confidence in the Saviour and fill our minds with wonder, love, and praise"**

A HYMN TO CHRIST

O Lamb of God, once wounded,
 With grief and pain weighed down,
 Thy sacred head surrounded
 With thorns, Thine only crown !
 How pale art Thou with anguish,
 With sore abuse and scorn !
 How does that visage languish,
 Which once was bright as morn !

O Lord of life and glory,
 What bliss till now was Thine !
 I read the wondrous story,
 I joy to call Thee mine
 Thy grief and Thy compassion
 Were all for sinners' gain ,
 Mine, mine was the transgression,
 But Thine the deadly pain

What language shall I borrow,
 To praise Thee, heavenly Friend,
 For this Thy dying sorrow,
 Thy pity without end ?
 Lord, make me Thine for ever,
 Nor let me faithless prove ,
 Oh ! let me, never, never
 Abuse Thy dying love !

Be near me, Lord, when dying ,
 Show Thou Thyselv to me ,
 And, for my succour flying,
 Come, Lord, to set me free !
 These eyes, new faith receiving,
 From Jesus shall not move ,
 For he who dies believing
 Dies safely through Thy love

ST BERNARD

* *What to Believe*, pp 194-196

X.—THE OBJECT OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION

The object of Christ's incarnation is one of the most important doctrines of Christianity, while, at the same time, perhaps none has been more misunderstood. Distorted views of it are current, which are opposed to reason and justice. On the other hand, rightly comprehended, it displays most gloriously the Divine perfections.

God created man holy. Happiness was to be the reward of obedience, death was to be the penalty of transgression. Adam, the first man, disobeyed God, and his posterity have trodden in his footsteps. All mankind are guilty and deserve punishment.

The great question is, must the whole human race perish? or can any plan be devised by which they can be saved consistently with justice?

Why free Pardon impossible—It may be said, that as an earthly parent forgives a repentant child, so we may be pardoned by our Heavenly Father. But a very important distinction has already been pointed out. God is our Sovereign as well as our Father. If a king were to pardon offenders upon their repentance, his laws would soon be disregarded, and his whole realm would be deluged with crime. A distinguished jurist says, "Forgiveness is a virtue only when justice is satisfied. Without this it is not a friend but a foe to society." And there are other reasons.

The relation in which God stands to His intelligent creatures is that of a moral governor, who has given them a law—to the transgression of which He has attached the heaviest of penalties. This law is not a mere arbitrary expression of the Divine will, but is based on the necessary and eternal distinction between right and wrong. What it commands is eternally right and what it forbids is eternally evil. Penalty, as attached to transgression, is not a mere expedient to deter men from committing it, and so to prevent the

injury to His creatures which would result from its prevalence. First and foremost is penalty designed to mark sin as intrinsically vile and hateful, and to do homage to the eternal law that wrong-doing deserves to suffer—a law which is written upon the human heart, and which our very consciousness of moral responsibility teaches us.

The feeling is universal, that man is a sinner, and that sin deserves punishment. The most momentous inquiry that can agitate the human breast is, How can I, a consciously guilty, sin-polluted being, be delivered from this load of evil, obtain forgiveness, and be restored to the Divine favour?*

Vicarious Suffering—*Vicarious* means acting or suffering for another. While men have acknowledged themselves to be sinful and deserving of punishment, from the earliest times the hope has been entertained that some mode of deliverance might be found.

Piopitiatory sacrifices† are the effort to solve this great problem. In them is expressed the need of reconciliation, and that the way to it is through suffering. Sacrifices were “either originally appointed by God Himself, or they spring from instincts so universal as to be inseparable from human nature. There is no other conceivable alternative that can account for their universal existence during all ages and among all nations of mankind.”

The idea that pervades sacrifices is that of substitution. It was sometimes expressed in words “We give thee this life instead of ours.” The offerer acknowledged guilt, and confessed that he deserved punishment, but hoped that God would accept the victim in his stead.

The old Aryans had this belief “The most prominent feature of the Vedic religion,” says the Rev K

* Abridged from “Theories of the Atonement,” by Professor Chalmers

† From *vicus*, change. *Viceroy*, one who acts for a king or queen

‡ Intended to secure pardon

S Macdonald, "is its sacrifices Scarcely a hymn is found in which sacrifice is not alluded to The very first verse of the very first hymn runs, 'I glorify Agni, the *purohit* of the sacrifice'" Another hymn says, "Do thou lead us safe through all sins by the way of sacrifice" The *Tandya Maha Brahmana* of the *Sama Veda* says of sacrifice, 'Whatever sins we have committed, knowing or unknowing, thou art the annulment thereof. Thou art the annulment of sin—of sin'**

Ordinary life is full of examples of vicarious suffering.

"We all suffer for each other and gain by each other's sufferings Parents work and endure pain that their children may prosper, children suffer for the sin of their parents, who have died before it bore fruit Sometimes it is a compulsory, sometimes a willing mediation The punishment which is earned by the husband falls upon the wife, the benefits in which all classes partake are wrought out by the unhealthy or dangerous toil of the few Soldiers endure wounds and death for those who sit at home" Another writer says, "We cannot look over the history of humanity without at once perceiving that the greatest benefactors of their species have generally been the greatest sufferers —the scaffold of the patriot and the stake of the martyr being the reward commonly assigned to those who have acquitted themselves the most generously towards their fellowmen, whether for this world or the next"

Truths are taught to children as they are able to receive them, and in a form which is intelligible The whole human race has been undergoing a process of education, as well as its individual members Sacrifices were enjoined among the Jews to convey to their minds, through the senses, a deep feeling of the evil of sin and its terrible consequences "While they beheld the dark volume of smoke ascending from the

* The Vedic Religion, pp 72, 76

fire that consumed the sacrifice which was burning in their *et al.*, how awful must have been the impression of the desert of sin, made by that dark volume of ascending smoke! The idea was distinct and deeply impressed that God's justice was a consuming fire to sinners; and that their souls escaped only through a vicarious atonement"**

" Every altar of sacrifice stood forth as a protest of human conscience against the notion, that repentance alone is sufficient to expiate guilt, and constitutes all the atonement required. It was the world's attestation to the solemn truth emphatically taught in Scripture, upon which Christianity itself is founded, and in reference to which alone it has any worth or preciousness for a guilt-smitten soul—the truth, that 'without shedding of blood there is no remission'."

Objects of Christ's atonement—The word atonement literally means a bringing to be at one. Christ's atonement denotes the expiation of sin through His obedience and sufferings. The object was not to render God merciful. The atonement originated in the love of the Father. It was to show that He is a Holy God in hating sin, a righteous God in punishing it, and a merciful God at the same time in forgiving it. The following narrative from Greek history has been used as an illustration.

letter of the law was not complied with, but the spirit of it was exceeded"*

"The case is not adduced as a perfect parallel to the atonement of Christ, but simply as an illustration of its principles, as tending to show that atonement may be as effectually made by substitution, as by the suffering of the real offender"†

God, in His great love to men, proposed as it were that His only begotten Son should become their substitute, and suffer in their stead. The Son gladly consented, saying, "Lo I come," "I delight to do Thy will"

As it was man who had sinned, it was necessary that the Son of God should take upon Him human nature. At the appointed time, He became incarnate. He lived on earth for thirty-three years, a period of time equaling the average duration of a human life. He endured all the sorrows which afflict humanity, and so completely accomplished the work He had undertaken, that on the cross He could say, "It is finished"

The Bible describes Jesus Christ as our Representative. It tells us that "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree," that "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all," that He "redeemed us from the curse, being made a curse for us." Jesus is one, we are millions, but His Divine nature gave an infinite value to His sacrifice. A single diamond, like the *Koh-i-nur*, is worth more than crores of ordinary pebbles. God can now pardon the sinner who comes to Him, seeking forgiveness on account of his surety.

The above is only one effect of Christ's atonement. It is intended to have a most salutary influence upon the sinner himself. This may be explained, though very imperfectly, by the following illustration:

A son leaves the house of a wise, affectionate, and good father, and goes to a far country, where he associates with vile companions. His father yearns over

* This made such an impression upon the people, that while Zaleucus presided over the Locrians, no person was again found guilty of adultery.

† *The Anxious Inquirer*, by J. A. James

him, and sends loving messages, urging him to come home, but the son turns a deaf ear to his entreaties. At last the father goes in search of his son. When he arrives, the son is amusing himself by swimming in a deep tank. He is suddenly seized with cramp, and is sinking in the water. The father plunges in, and at the risk of own life rescues his son. What *ought* to be the effect of this? Should it not melt the son to penitence and love? If he resisted, would he not be justly regarded as a hardened reprobate, who deserved to be left to "eat of the fruit of his own ways?" God our heavenly Father says, "Turn, O backsliding children," but men, naturally, would go farther and farther from Him. The death of Christ on our account, the strongest proof of the Father's love, is the most powerful means which can be employed to awaken in us a sense of our guilt and a desire to seek reconciliation.

The Rev. T. E. Slater, in his chapter on the "Insufficiency of Brahminism" shows that the want of the above is "the fatal missing link, absent in all non-Christian systems, viz., a *dominant motive to holiness*—that moral dynamic* which the Gospel of Christ alone can furnish."

"For, the great question is, what will induce men to repent and to reform, to be 'alive unto God?' Chandra Sen says, in his lecture on "Regenerating Faith," that men want 'a new life,' and that 'the simple creed of the love of God' will 'effect the regeneration of their souls from sin.' But a mere creed has always been powerless to redeem men. Ethical and theological teaching have failed, again and again, to effect a spiritual reformation among the nations. Holiness may be insisted upon as the remedy for sin, but what is to induce the sinner who loves his sin so well, to take the remedy? That which Brahminism makes the Remedy, is in Christianity represented as the *result* of using the remedy. It is Christ who helps us to purge away the sinful past before we feel able to advance towards God and to rejoice in Him. It is Christ who, seeing the poor paralytic sinner, enables him to arise and walk. It is God manifested in Christ, showing men how sin affects His Love, and how His Holiness recoils from evil, which is the

* Power, force

charm that breaks the spell of sin. It is the Cross of Christ, on which Holy Love is seen to suffer, and sin is seen in its real nature—a spectacle we behold nowhere else—that is to ‘draw all men’ unto the Father from whom they have strayed”*

Objections—The Christian doctrine of the Atonement has been assailed on various grounds. Some of the objections are diametrically opposed to one another “By one critic,” says Mansel, “the doctrine is rejected because it is more consistent with the infinite mercy of God to pardon sin freely, without any atonement whatsoever. By another, because from the unchangeable nature of God’s laws it is impossible that sin can be pardoned at all.” The former would sacrifice God’s justice, the latter His mercy.

Another objection may be noticed. It is maintained that it is unjust that the innocent should suffer for the sins of the guilty. Newman Hall makes the following reply

“It would indeed be most unrighteous in any earthly ruler, were he to seize an innocent person, and make him suffer the sentence of the law, while the culprit himself was allowed to escape. Supposing, however, the purposes of law were equally accomplished, by an innocent person *voluntarily* submitting to death on behalf of a large multitude of offenders who must otherwise have died, there would be no departure from justice, neither would any alarm be caused to the innocent, by the expectation of being themselves compelled to suffer for the guilty. But if, by such voluntary transference of suffering, those offenders were also reclaimed and made good citizens,—and if moreover he who became their substitute, were restored to life, and as the result of his mediation, were raised to higher honour than before, not only justice would be satisfied, but benevolence would rejoice. So with the sacrifice of Christ. He, the righteous, suffered, that we, the unrighteous, might escape. But the act was

* Keshab Chandra Sen, pp. 166, 167

voluntary. The suffering of Christ was brief, while His triumph is everlasting."

As already mentioned, the Atonement originated in the love of the Father. If a son were scourged in the presence of a parent, the latter would feel the stripes as much as his child. In like manner, God the Father, while inflicting the penalty of a broken law on Jesus Christ, must, speaking after the manner of men, have suffered with Him.

The ends of justice are satisfied by the Atonement. While sin is pardoned, sin itself is shown to be an infinite evil. If God spared not His own Son, when He stood in the room of the guilty, He will not spare sinners when they stand on their own footing.

It should be understood that illustrations of the Atonement drawn from this life must be very imperfect. "The case is altogether unparalleled and unique."

"Like the love in which it originated, and which found in it the channel along which it pours its blessings on mankind, there is in it 'a height and a depth, a length and a breadth, which passeth knowledge'."

TAKING REFUGEE IN CHRIST

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side* which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power

Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands,
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and Thou alone

* When the side of Jesus on the cross was pierced by a spear, blood and water flowed out.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
 Simply to Thy cross I cling,
 Naked, come to Thee for dress,
 Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
 Foul, I to the Fountain fly
 Wash me Saviour, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
 When my eyelids close in death,
 When I soar through tracts unknown,
 See Thee on Thy judgment-throne,
 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee!

TOPLADY

XI — THE WAY OF SALVATION.

The question of questions is, What must I do to be saved? It is true that this is never asked by many. Their sole inquiries are, What shall we eat? How can we get wealth? How can we raise ourselves to honour? But a summons, which cannot be resisted, will come to leave all earthly possessions —

"Thou inevitable day,
 When a voice to me shall say—
 'Thou must rise and come away,
 All thine other journeys past,
 Gird thee, and make ready fast
 For thy longest and thy last'"

It is possible that men who have lived like brutes, without any concern about a future life, may die like brutes. If, however, there is serious thought about the eternity into which the dying man is about to enter the question is put with the most trembling solicitude, "Wherewithal shall I appear before the Lord?"

Peculiarity of Christianity — With one exception, all religions of the world teach that we are to be saved through our own merits. We are naturally proud. The Bible says, "Vain man would be wise, though born like a wild ass's colt." He has also the presumption

to think that he may stand before God clothed in the filthy robes of his own righteousness. The Hindus vainly suppose that they can wash away their sins by bathing in certain rivers, and merit heaven by gifts to temples and Brahmins. The Muhammadans trust in their prayers, alms-giving, and pilgrimage to Mecca.

Christianity, on the other hand, declares that salvation is not of *works*, but of *grace*. If we enter heaven, it must be through the merits of *another*, not through *our own*. The truth of this will appear on a little consideration.

The laws of a country require perfect obedience. Suppose a thief and murderer were to reform, this would not atone for the past if he live honestly and in peace, he does no more than his duty. So it is with the Divine government. We have been breaking God's commands every day of our lives. Even if we could hereafter yield perfect obedience, it would not blot out the long black catalogue already recorded against us. But there is no man, even the best on earth, who is not daily adding to his sins. Tried by our own actions, every mouth must be stopped, and the whole world be found guilty before God.

Way of Salvation — The following illustration will explain, in some measure, how we are to be saved —

A boy was on the roof of a high building. Suddenly his foot slipped, and he fell over. In his descent, he caught a rope, and hung suspended in mid air. He could neither get up nor down, and it was evident that he could sustain himself but a short time. He expected that in a few minutes he must drop, and be dashed to pieces.

Just then a kind and powerful man, standing below the boy with extended arms, cried out, "Let go the rope, and I will receive you. I promise that you shall escape unhurt."

The boy hesitated a while, but at length dropped safely into the arms of his deliverer.

The boy's danger is a representation of our own. He could neither get back to the place from which he fell, nor descend in safety to the ground, if no one had come to his rescue, he must have perished. We can neither go back to innocence, nor make atonement for our sins. As the boy was saved by the interposition of another, so we must be saved by Jesus Christ. The youth hesitated at first, doubting the proffered aid, but his faith afterward was the means of his deliverance. Jesus Christ says to us, "Let go the rope of self-righteousness, trust in me and I will save you."

The believer thus responds —

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall,
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Saviour and my all"

It is very humbling to man's pride to receive salvation as a free gift. He would fain merit it, in some degree, by his own good works, or at least render himself more worthy of the boon. Such a feeling is one of the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel.

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all"

All the preparation required is to feel your need of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is true that we need to be cleansed from sin, but this must be done *after* we come to Christ—not *before*. Jesus Christ came to save sinners. He invites the weary and heavy-laden to come to him. They are not first to try to get rid of part of the burden of sin. The course to be taken is well expressed in the following words —

Just as I am,—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,—
O Lamb of God, I come'

Just as I am,—and waiting not,
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am,—poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am,—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

It may be briefly summed up in the cry, “Lord, save me, I perish” Disclaiming all merit of our own, we are to receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Like a drowning man, when a plank is thrown towards him, who first catches hold of the plank, and then rests upon it, so should we first take hold of Christ, or receive Him, and then continue to rest upon Him.

Effects—Salvation through grace is calculated to promote two feelings of the utmost importance—*humility* and *love*.

The more ignorant Hindus think the gift of a cow to a Brahman will secure heaven. It is equally vain to suppose that we can be saved through any other fancied good works. Boasting is entirely excluded by salvation through Jesus Christ, and the spirit of humility is fostered. Love is another feeling awakened. If a person whom we disliked saved our life at the risk of his own, would not the alienation be removed, and gratitude kindled? Thus it is with the believer in Christ. Formerly he regarded God as an enemy to be feared, now he looks upon Him as his greatest Benefactor. Every thing else will follow in the train of love. There will be unfeigned sorrow for past offences, and an earnest desire to avoid in future every thing displeasing to God.

Objections—Some may object that free salvation through Christ will tempt men to sin, they consider punishments and rewards necessary to secure obedience. But true love is the strongest of all motives. A mother watches over her child with far greater care

than a slave who fears the lash, or a hireling who looks to his pay

The believer, however, is not left to himself. Jesus Christ uses the illustration "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Through faith we are united to Christ, like a branch ingrafted upon a tree. We share in His life, and become animated by His spirit.

The absolute necessity of faith may be easily understood. Unless we believe that Jesus is able to save us, we shall not go to Him.

Doubters — While Jesus was on earth, a man in deep distress said to Him, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Though the reader may only be able to

"Stretch the lame hands of faith and grope,"
let him go to Jesus, saying,

"Just as I am,—though toss'd about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

Tennyson thus describes the sincere inquirer —

"Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them, thus he came at length
To find a stronger faith his own"

Two very important points in the above should be noticed. The inquirer was "pure in deeds." A man who indulges in vice of any kind cannot expect to arrive at the truth. Also, "he fought his doubts." If a person is merely content to doubt without careful investigation, it is impossible for him to "find a stronger faith."

The most effectual way of getting all our doubts removed is to cast ourselves at the feet of Jesus. Let us tell Him all our wants, and they will be supplied out of His inexhaustible fulness. And let the reader go to Him at once. No preparation is necessary. This very moment Jesus is ready to receive you and to say, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

THE CALL OF JESUS

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "Come unto Me and rest,
 Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
 'Thy head upon My breast'
 I came to Jesus as I was—
 Weary, and worn, and sad,
 I found in Him a resting-place,
 And He has made me glad

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "Behold, I freely give
 The living water—thirsty one,
 Stoop down, and drink, and live"
 I came to Jesus, and I drank
 Of that life-giving stream,
 My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 And now I live in Him

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "I am this dark world's Light,
 Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
 And all thy day be bright"
 I looked to Jesus and I found
 In Him, my Star, my Sun,
 And in that Light of life I'll walk
 Till travelling days are done

BOVAR

XII — HOLINESS

Need.—Man requires more than mere pardon of sin. If a king were to remit the sentences of the criminals,

in a jail, all the thieves, robbers, murderers, and malefactors of every kind, would be let loose Would the people, however, be willing to allow them to enter their houses, and mix with them freely? Suppose that the doors, not of our prisons, but of hell itself, were thrown open—which shall never be—but suppose they were, would the gates of heaven open to receive its inmates? No Over them these words stand inscribed, “There entereth nothing here to hurt or to defile” From their company every spirit of the just would shrink with holy horror If so, it is plain that it is not enough to be pardoned, to be justified. We require also to be purified from sin*

The Standard —The need of sanctification has been admitted by thoughtful men in all ages, but the standard aimed at has often been imperfect, and the means employed insufficient Most people are satisfied if their conduct is free from crime, and they are honest and benevolent Others attach importance to religious observances But all this is not enough The outside of the sepulchre may be whitened, while it is still full within of all uncleanness

Christianity places before men the loftiest standard of holiness, “Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” Union with Christ is the channel by which it is to be attained The agent is the Holy Spirit The Trinity gloriously unite in man’s redemption The special work of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify us, and fit us for heaven It is true that various means are prescribed, but it is He who gives efficacy to them all

Requisites to Progress —Some of the principal will be briefly noticed

A deep sense of the evil of Sin —This is essential Formerly sin was beloved, now it must be hated. In ancient times, one mode of punishment was to fasten a corpse to a criminal, which he had to drag about with him

* Abridged from Guthrie

wherever he went We should regard sin with equal abhorrence, and seek deliverance from it with equal earnestness Sorrow for sin and a turning away from it, is called *repentance*. Mere regret is insufficient. The drunkard, in his sober moments, mourns over the evils he is bringing upon himself and his family, but this is not true repentance, unless he abandons the vice Jesus Christ is exalted as a Saviour to give *repentance* Let it be earnestly sought

There are little books containing a text of Scripture and a verse of a hymn for every day in the year. Such may be used with advantage, but they should not be allowed to supersede the study of the Bible itself.

Prayer — This has been repeatedly urged. It is indispensable to growth in holiness. There should be at least morning and evening prayer, but often throughout the day the heart may be lifted up to God. Any temptation specially calls for Divine help.

Of all petitions, the most earnest should be for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Every other blessing follows in its train. The following words may express the feeling which should be cherished.

More of Thy presence, Lord, impart,
More of Thine image let me bear,
Erect Thy throne within my heart,
And reign without a rival there

*The due observance of Sunday, or the Lord's Day** — As a period of rest, it is a great blessing to man. It gives the busy labourer a day at home with his own family. The change of thought is refreshing to the mind. The influence of the Christian Sabbath is very considerable in promoting the happiness and civilization of a community. But it is of chief advantage as an opportunity of moral and religious culture. It calls the thoughts away from merely secular employments, and invites us to the contemplation of those higher truths which concern our eternal well-being.

On the Lord's Day, ordinary duties should be laid aside, and we should devote more time than on other days to the reading of the Scriptures and religious books. Meditation is another duty. There should be a careful review of our moral and religious conduct during the past week, and any circumstances calling for special watchfulness during the coming week.

* Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, which is hence called the *Lord's Day*. The old name *Sunday* is often used. The Jewish *Sabbath*, or day of rest, was on the seventh day. The name *Sabbath* is sometimes used for the *Lord's day*. The *Christian Sabbath* is more correct.

should be considered. Earnest prayer for pardon and strength to resist temptation, should accompany the exercise.

The public worship of God is one of the chief duties of the Lord's Day. It has a most beneficial influence in several respects.

The reading of suitable Christian books.—While the Bible should be the chief study, some other books may be read with advantage. A good *Hymn Book* should perhaps rank next to the Bible. Numerous books have been provided for English Christians. Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* is valued by earnest inquirers. Pike's *Guide for Young Disciples* is a useful work, more recent. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a favourite all the world over. The prices of some books will be found on the last page of the wrapper.

Intercourse with Christian friends—Provided the friends are of the right stamp, few means are more profitable. "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Prayer, the study of the Scriptures, and conversation on the Christian life, should occupy such little gatherings.

Care of the Heart—The nature of a stream is determined by its source. The character of our actions depends upon our heart. Solomon says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Tennyson embodies much in a single line.

"Self reverence, self-knowledge, self control."

The Bible contains the highest motive to "*self-reverence*". The Apostle Paul, when urging Christians to purity, says, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Our desire should be that the Holy Spirit may dwell constantly within us, inspiring every thought, word, and action.

"*Self-knowledge*" is of great importance. People deceive themselves far oftener than they deceive others.

Our friends have frequently a more correct estimate

of our character than we have ourselves. So highly was the precept, "Know thyself," esteemed among the ancients, that it is said to have come down from heaven.

Most men live at random. Their actions are guided by the impulse of the moment. Before doing anything, the question should always be asked, Is this right? The man who does not use his reason is scorned as a fool. It is still more inexplicable to act without consulting conscience beforehand. Nor is this enough. There must be careful consideration afterwards. The rule of the old Pythagoreans is thus given —

" Let not soft sleep usurp oblivious sway
 Till thrice you're told the deeds that mark'd the day,
 Whither thy steps? what good for thee most fitted
 Was aptly done? and what good deed omitted?
 And when you've summed the tale, wipe out the bairn
 With gracious grief, and in the good be glad!"

"No man," says Blackie, "will ever attain to high excellence in what an excellent old divine calls 'The life of God in the soul of man,' without cultivating stated periods of solitude, and using that solitude for the important purpose of self-knowledge and self-amelioration. 'Commune with your own heart on your bed and be still,' said the Psalmist."

But this is not enough. The prayer of the Psalmist should also be ours, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

"Self-control" is another essential. Winslow says, "A habit of strict and uniform self-control, in all particulars, early formed and maintained through life, is among the greatest of earthly blessings. It is at the basis of all other virtues, and the most important element of success in every calling. Health, cheerfulness, vigour of mind, purity of desire, efficiency, long and useful life, are its natural attendants. 'He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things'."

Jesus Christ says, " If any man will come after me, let him deny himself " " No cross, no crown "

" Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," is an injunction never to be forgotten In many cases where we have fallen into sin, experience tells us that we might have avoided the fall by avoiding the temptation This caution is especially necessary in the case of the young Ungodly companions and bad books are to be carefully shunned Some temptations we must meet, and " blessed is the man that endureth temptation " The rule applies to going into needless temptation When called by duty to trial, there should be special watchfulness and prayer

Backsliding —The reader is warned that it is a slow and painful process to overcome sin The Bible compares it to dying on a cross The young convert often supposes that it will be otherwise He thinks that he has seen so clearly the excellence of divine things and the vanity of earthly pleasures, that he will be able to resist every temptation Alas ! he is soon undeceived The goodness of many is like the " morning cloud and early dew which soon passeth away " It may be that besetting sins, which he thought he had overcome, suddenly assail him, and he succumbs to the enticement " Only this once " is a fatal excuse The first offence makes the second all the easier Sometimes the gathering power of evil, the frequent fall, the bitter but unavailing remorse, lead to despair

Should the reader backslide, let him return at once to his Heavenly Father as a repentant child, pleading the promise, " If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness " He may learn from his sad experience his own weakness, and the importance of avoiding temptation But the words of Christ are the great lesson taught,— " Without me ye can do nothing " Abide in Him continually Think as He thinks, feel as He feels, choose as He chooses Let His wisdom be your wisdom , His righteousness your righteousness ,

His strength your strength. Thus shall you overcome every sin, and be "filled with the fulness of God"

PRAYER FOR HOLINESS.

O¹ for a heart to praise my God,
 A heart from sin set free,
 A heart that always feels Thy blood
 So freely spilt for me,
 A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
 My great Redeemer's throne,
 Where only Christ is heard to speak,
 Where Jesus reigns alone,
 A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
 Believing, true, and clean,
 Which neither life nor death can part
 From Him that dwells within,
 A heart in every thought renowod,
 And full of love divine,
 Perfect and right and pure and good,
 A copy, Lord, of Thine!
 Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart,
 Come quickly from above,
 Write Thy new name upon my heart,
 Thy new, best name of love

C WESLEY

XIII.—PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Some of the principal doctrines and duties of the Gospel have been briefly explained. Earnest and prayerful investigation will commend them to the conscience of the reader. His duty with regard to a profession of Christianity will now be considered.

Hinduism is probably the reader's ancestral creed. All intelligent lovers of their country must see the terrible evils it has inflicted upon India. Its pan-

theism on the one hand, and its polytheism on the other, have debauched the moral sense of the people. Its system of caste has tended to crush the intellect, to destroy the feeling of brotherhood, and to concentrate religion in mere outward ceremonies.

The righteous Judge of all the earth will try persons who ignorantly worship the gods of their fathers by a different standard from those who are sufficiently enlightened to see the folly and sin of idolatry. Knowledge brings with it responsibility. The man who believes in only one Almighty Creator of the universe and yet professes to be a worshipper of Vishnu or Siva, is knowingly and wilfully guilty of high treason against God, and of perpetuating the reign of superstition among his countrymen.

Excuses—There are several excuses by which educated Hindus seek to palter with their consciences, one or two of which may be noticed.

The desire to please parents and relatives is, perhaps, the most common reason assigned for conforming to idolatry. Within proper limits, the feeling is praiseworthy, but to break God's first and great command at the wish of any human being is a plea which cannot be sustained for a moment. Suppose a parallel case. Parents urge a son to take part in a robbery, they will be vexed if he does not consent. Would a judge accept such an excuse? Would it be true kindness to his parents to join them in such an act? Is he not rather bound, not only to abstain entirely from any participation in the crime, but to do his utmost to dissuade his parents from engaging in it? It would be great cruelty to behave otherwise. Idolatry is robbing God of the honour justly due to Him, and giving it to a dumb block. So far from encouraging parents in such a course, love to them demands that every effort should be made to lead them to worship the one true God. The excuse is equally frivolous, that they will not consent. Take the supposed case of robbery. If the son were to say, my parents are bent upon this;

it is useless trying to change their minds, I must simply join them would this be held as a justification?

If our friends and relations wish to do anything wrong, our duty is to warn them against it, but if they will not hear, the responsibility rests with them Should, however, we take part, we share in their guilt, and with conduct far more blameworthy because of our greater knowledge.

To please a relative will not be received as an excuse in a court of justice for breaking the law of the land, still less will it be accepted by the great Judge of the universe Obey God rather than man

Some allege that they worship the one true God under the name of Vishnu, Siva, or Kali

In speaking, we are bound to use words in their ordinary sense Suppose a man were to say to himself by *white* I mean *black*, would he be justified in saying of an ordinary crow, I saw a white crow? In spite of such a pretext, it would be deceit It is well known what Hindus understand by Vishnu, Siva, and Kali, and to mean something entirely different when employing the terms, is fraud The God of truth is not to be worshipped by hypocrisy A man is not to deny God by appearing a Hindu, when he believes Hinduism to be false

A third reason assigned by some is, *that they will do more good to their countrymen by not making a profession of Christianity* This is as fallacious as the foregoing

Philosophers among the ancient Greeks and Romans condemned polytheism, but they outwardly conformed to the national creed The people remained as zealous idolaters as ever The early Christians separated themselves entirely, and soon the idol temples were deserted Reformation is impossible if all adhere to old customs

The principle itself is wrong The great question is not, how can I do most good? but, what is the right course? Suppose a revenue collector were to defraud

Government under the excuse that he could thus give more alms to the poor, support schools, and do other acts of charity the flimsiness of the pretence would be apparent to all. We are not to do evil that good may come. To benefit our countrymen is not a sufficient reason for violating God's express command. But, as already shown, conformers to idolatry, so far from manifesting true kindness to their relatives, are, in reality, their greatest enemies.

The actual cause of dislike to make a profession of Christianity by some who are convinced of its truth, is the sacrifice which it will involve. The greatness of this is not overlooked. It is felt acutely by all who have to make known the Gospel message. None realized it more than Jesus Christ. Foreseeing what His followers would have to endure, He said "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword." "A man's foes shall be those of his own household." "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." "Whoso confesseth me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven, and whosoever denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Rewards of Obedience — But if the sufferings are great, so are the rewards. Conscience, instead of accusing, will comfort and animate. The sincere convert takes rank among the greatest benefactors of his country.

When India was comparatively civilized, the people of England were painted savages. Why has India remained nearly stationary or even retrograded for two thousand years, while England now occupies one of the foremost places among the nations of the earth?

Hinduism has been the blight of India. Till its withering influence is removed, her people can never attain the position and happiness to which the many advantages they possess would otherwise raise them.

On the other hand, the people of England threw

away their idols and embraced Christianity, a religion which, to use the words of Gladstone, "for the last fifteen hundred years has always marched in the van of all human improvement and civilization, and has harnessed to its car all that is great and glorious in the human race." A similar change is what is needed to raise India

The reader, doubtless, appreciates the advantages of female education. It is well known that some of its strongest opponents are among the women themselves. In like manner, Hindus view with dislike the progress of Christianity, although it is fraught with the richest blessings to themselves and their children.

"He who speaks or writes a syllable against Christianity," says Macaulay, "is guilty of high treason against the civilization of mankind."

It has happened that the baptism of one member of a family has led others to accept the truth. Even should the convert lose an earthly father, he has gained a Heavenly Father. He is now an adopted son of the King of heaven, who watches over him, and orders all things for his good. This life is a course of preparation, and trials may be necessary here, but they will soon cease. Admitted into his father's presence, his soul and body glorified and shining forth with the brightness of the firmament, surrounded by a happy holy brotherhood gathered out of every nation under heaven, with heart overflowing with gratitude, he will join in the everlasting song, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!"

The Appendix contains an example of self-dedication to the service of God. This may be adopted with great advantage. Along with it, however, there should be the public profession of Christianity by baptism. The rite is very significant. Of the baptised person Guthrie says, "Not only in the general does he profess himself to be Christ's, but more especially he testifies that he believes his nature to be polluted, and that that

nature requires to be changed Has he been baptised into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? Not only does he signify his belief in the Trinity, but he professes to take each of the three persons in the capacity or office specially assigned to him the Father is his God and Portion, his Judge and Ruler, the Son as his Redeemer, his Guide, his Teacher the Holy Spirit as his Quickener, his Comforter, his Sanctifier ”

Danger of Delay —The following caution, given by Dr M Mitchell, is most necessary “ Perhaps you say you will one day obey the command,—you will come out, only *not now*. You will wait some months, or at most, some years, and *then*—Miserable delusion! most fatal snare of the tempter! Delay is the ruin of countless millions Millions are eternally undone, who once, like you, had the intention of some day turning to God Have you never heard the terrific saying, ‘the road to hell is paved with good intentions?’ It is not more terrific than time To-day is yours—you may never see tomorrow ‘Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation’ ”

Confess your faith in Christ, manfully fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and continue Christ’s faithful soldier and servant unto your life’s end

Ashamed to be a Christian,
Afraid the world should know
I’m on my way to Zion,
Where joys eternal flow!
Forbid it, O, my Saviour,
That I should ever be
Afraid to wear Thy colour,
Or blush to follow Thee

Ashamed to be a Christian,
To love my God and King!
The fire of zeal is burning,
My soul is on the wing
I want a faith made perfect,
That all the world may see
I stand a living witness,
Of mercy, rich and free

Ashamed to be a Christian !
 My guilty fears depart,
 I will not heed the tempter
 That whispers to my heart
 Dear Saviour, though unworthy,
 Yet this my only plea,
 Thy all-atoning merit,
 For Thou hast died for me

XIV —THE OBJECT OF LIFE

Most people spend life without any definite purpose. They may be compared to a ship which is allowed to be driven hither and thither on the ocean by the variable winds and currents. A man with some fixed object is like a vessel bound to a certain port, which is steadily kept in view, whatever storms or calms may be encountered. To work upon a plan makes a vast difference in what we can accomplish.

It is not sufficient, however, to have merely some aim in life. Its nature is of vital importance. There are many persons who have an object before them, to which every thing is made subservient, whose lives must yet be pronounced a failure.

The World cannot satisfy —*Enjoyment* is the great end of most men. It assumes various forms. One of the most common and harmless is to seek to live comfortably. Others look for it in idleness, some in amusements, some in gratifying the appetites.

Wealth is regarded by many as “the one thing needful.” They rise early, sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, that they may increase their gains. Beyond this, they have neither thought nor desire.

Honour is with a smaller number the chief object of ambition. It is sought in different ways. Fools seek it by squandering their money at marriages, some men strive to obtain it through office, a few by means of literature or science.

Mournful experience has shown that all these objects combined and attained cannot give true happiness

Chesterfield says, "I have run the silly rounds of business and pleasure, and have done with them all I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which is, in truth, very low, whereas, those that have not experienced, always overrate them."

Lord Byron had wealth, rank, genius, and reputation He is truthfully described as the man who

"Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump
Of fame, drank early, deeply drank, drank draughts
That common millions might have quenched, then died
Of thirst, because there was no more to drink"

Even could earthly things satisfy the soul, there is one thought which must always mar their joy

" . . . that disheartening fear,
Which all who love beneath the sky
Feel when they gaze on what is dear,
The dreadful thought, that it must die
That desolating thought, which comes
Into men's happiest hours and homes "

God intended that it should be so Augustine says, "O Lord, Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it find rest in Thee." Cowper expresses similar sentiments —

"But, O Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown,
Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away"

Ponder deeply the importance of life "Think of living!" says Carlyle "Thy life, were thou the pitifullest of all the sons of the earth, is no idle dream, but a solemn reality It is thine own, it is all thou hast to confront eternity with Work, then, like a star, unquenching, yet unending"

It is true that there are several objects to be kept in view in life. We must provide for our support, we

should store our minds with useful knowledge, and there are many other things which may be lawfully pursued. What we are now considering is the *chief* end of man, the *one great design* to which every thing else should be made subordinate.

Chief Aim in Life — This may be variously expressed. *To do God's will*, is one form. The two great commandments in which Jesus Christ summed up the whole law have already been mentioned.

The Bible says of God, "Thou art good, and doest good." We shall best fulfil the purpose of our being if we strive to be like God — *to be good and to do good.*

To be good is the first step. Without this we cannot expect to do any real, lasting good to others, and even although we could, to be a "*castaway*" ourselves, would be a deplorable end. *To be as good as we can* is the best means of being *as useful as we can*.

Confessing our sinfulness, we should accept God's gracious offers of pardon through Jesus Christ, and trust in Him alone for salvation. We should earnestly strive, through the help of the Holy Spirit, to conquer every sin, and to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ. The Apostle Paul says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." We should seek that Christ's will may be ours.

To do good is the second step. Some of the means of usefulness will be noticed.

One of the petitions of the Lord's prayer is, "Thy kingdom come." This world is a revolted province of God's dominions. Men have risen in rebellion against their great Creator and said, "We will not have Him to reign over us." They have turned from God, the "perfection of beauty," to hideous idols, they have worshipped brute beasts, and even devils. By far the greatest good we can do to our fellowmen is to lead them to return to their rightful Lord. It is of little avail whatever else is done, if this is not gained. So long as men are rebels against God, they can have no true joy, while every other blessing will follow recon-

ciliation If God's will were done on earth as it is in heaven, earth would resemble heaven in happiness

India is one of the strongholds of idolatry She has thus been addressed "Oh India! in thee are found the types of all that is beautiful and magnificent In thy land are the Creator's glories peculiarly manifest, and providential gifts bestowed in richest profusion , yet thou art without thy God Thou art rich in all grains, and dyes, and minerals, in spices and perfumes , but thou art not rich unto God Thou displayest on thy unbounded surface all physical beauty and grace , but thou art unto God a dreary wilderness Thy sun scatters its vivid beams and makes thy day one of surpassing glory , but thou art covered with the shroud of spiritual night. Thy people possess intellect and imagination , but in the things of God thy wise men are fools,—thy learned are dotards—thine aged men grope as the blind "

What more glorious enterprise could there be than to seek to turn India from dumb idols to the living God ! It is one which has special claims upon you The land to be benefited is that of your birth. Its people are bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh You have also peculiar advantages for the work Foreigners must often speak with a "stammering tongue," they are unacquainted with the thoughts and feelings of those they address , the doctrines they teach are looked upon as alien You can use accents which fall with sweetness upon your fellow-countrymen , you know the misapprehensions which have to be guarded against, the best means of presenting truth , you can testify from your own experience The history of India shows what changes may be effected even through the labours of one man Gantama Buddha taught a system which eventually spread from Peshawar to Cape Comorin Largely through the efforts of Sankaracharya, Brahmanism regained its ascendancy Men equally zealous, with God's help, might speedily turn the whole of India, not from one superstition to

another, but to the one true faith, which is gradually extending over the whole earth.

Various means may be adopted to diffuse religious truth. The first and most important is to be a "living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men." Show what true Christianity is by your life. This is a kind of teaching which all can understand. Conversation is a valuable agency. Seizing favourable opportunities, bring the claims of Christianity before relatives, friends, and others whom you meet. You can also try to persuade them to attend lectures and public worship. Parents may be induced to send their children to Christian schools. Tracts and books may be circulated with great advantage. After speaking to a person, give him something to read to deepen the impression. Those who are qualified may give public addresses on Christianity. In Calcutta, there are several Bengalis, employed in public offices, who thus, in the evenings, make known the truth to their countrymen. The noblest of all employments is to devote, in a proper spirit, one's whole life to this work.

In addition to the above direct means, aid may be afforded by money for the support of preachers, schools, and the printing of Scriptures, &c. Some persons give a fixed proportion of their income, e.g., one-tenth, to such objects. This example deserves to be imitated.

While the diffusion of Christianity is at once the highest benefit which can be conferred upon the people of India and the surest road to every other blessing, all measures calculated to promote health and happiness should be aided. Christians should be foremost in every scheme of benevolence, such as female education, widow marriage, &c.

Some may excuse themselves on the ground that they have neither time nor ability to do good. This is a great mistake. The real cause is want of inclination. The love of ease or money lies at the root of the objection.

To seek the happiness of others, is the best means of promoting your own. Kingsley says " If you wish to be miserable, you must think about *yourself*, about what *you* want, what *you* like, what respect people pay to *you*, what people think of *you*, and then to *you* nothing will be pure You will spoil every thing you touch , you will be as wretched as you choose "

The humblest means of doing good should not be despised A benevolent man said, " I see in this world two heaps—human happiness and misery. If I can take but the smallest bit from one heap and add to the other, I carry a point. If I can wipe away the tears of a child, I feel I have done something I should be glad indeed to do greater things, but I will not neglect this "

It is surprising, however, how much one mind, rightly directed and intent upon its purpose, can accomplish with the Divine blessing

Let the grand object of your life be to *do God's will*, and it cannot be a failure in whatever circumstances you may be placed You may strive to be rich and yet die a poor man , you may set your heart on some honour which always eludes your grasp. Even should you attain riches and rank, the loss of health or some other affliction may damp your joys , while, even at the best, the want of permanence must cast a shadow over all Not so if you live for God You may do His will in the lowest sphere as well as in the highest , when prostrated by sickness, as much as when most actively engaged. Milton says,

"They also serve who only stand and wait "

Importance of the Present Time —Never did young men in this country enter upon the stage of life under circumstances more interesting and important than at present The wall of caste, by which India was inclosed, is crumbling down , her representatives are now heard in Europe and America , education is spreading, many " run to and fro," and knowledge is being increased

It cannot be denied that the time is also one of special peril. Former beliefs are losing their hold , former restraints are being removed , respect for authority is being replaced in some by an arrogance which neither fears God nor regards man. There is great danger lest old virtues should disappear, and new vices prove a fresh curse to the country

The weal or woe of India depends largely upon her educated sons The influence once possessed by the Brahmins is rapidly passing over into their hands , they are becoming more and more the leaders of the people Let them seek to combine the excellencies of East and West, avoiding whatever is reprehensible in either. Let their chief object in life be the glory of God and the good of their country Thus will they secure to themselves the greatest amount of happiness here and hereafter , while they will prove a blessing to generations yet unborn

SELF-DEDICATION.

Jesus, Master, whose I am,
Purchased Thine alone to be,
By Thy blood, O spotless Lamb,
Shed so willingly for me,
Let my heart be all Thine own,
Let me live to Thee alone.

Other lords have long held sway ;
Now, Thy name alone to bear,
Thy dear voice alone obey ,
Is my daily, hourly prayer ,
Whom have I in heaven but Thee ?
Nothing else my joy can be

Jesus, Master ! I am Thine ,
Keep me faithful, keep me near ,
Let Thy presence in me shine ,
All my homeward way to cheer
Jesus ! at Thy feet I fall ,
Oh ! be Thou mine All in all

Jesus, Master, whom I serve,
Though so feebly and so ill,
Strengthen hand, and heart, and nerve,
All Thy bidding to fulfil,
Open Thou mine eyes to see
All the work Thon hast for me

Jesus, Master ! wilt Thou use
One who owes Thee more than all ?
As Thou wilt ! I would not choose
Only let me hear Thy call
Jesus ! let me always be
In Thy service glad and free

HAVERGAL

APPENDIX.

PRAYERS FOR "SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH"

PREFATORY NOTE

PRAYER is the desire of the heart. Each person's circumstances vary. Private prayer is best expressed in our own words, and in the language with which we are most familiar. Still, examples of prayer may be useful in suggesting thoughts.

Additional examples will be found in *Prayers for Students and others*. A copy will be forwarded post free from the Tract Depot, Madras, for one anna.

1 PRAYER FOR EARNESTNESS IN RELIGION

O Lord, my heavenly Father, with deep humility and self-abasement, I cast myself at Thy feet, beseeching Thy gracious favour.

From my birth to the present moment I have been continually dependent upon Thee for the support of the life which Thou didst at first bestow. Day by day hast Thou been loading me with Thy benefits. I lament my unthankfulness to Thee for all Thy mercies. I have received Thy gifts, but have forgotten Thee the Giver. I have loved the world and the things of the world, but I have not loved Thee. Thou hast not been in all my thoughts. The strength which I have received from Thee has been spent, not in Thy service, but in following my own sinful desires.

Is it not Thou who hast awakened me to a sense of the sin and folly of my conduct? Deepen, I beseech

thee, this feeling Enable me to ponder the solemn question, what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Let me find no rest till I find rest in Thee

May it henceforth be my chief desire to know Thy will, and to please Thee in all things Enable me to use diligently every means of arriving at religious truth, with earnest prayer for Thy blessing Forbid that I should put off the inquiry to a more convenient season that will never come. Give me grace to act up to my convictions of what is right Enable me to seek Thee with my whole heart, to seek Thee so as to find Thee

2 PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL LIGHT

From Augustine, one of the most distinguished early Christians, born in Africa, 354 A.D.

O Lord, who art the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life, in whom there is no darkness, error, vanity, nor death, the light, without which there is darkness, the way, without which there is wandering, the truth, without which there is error, the life, without which there is death, say, Lord, 'Let there be light,' and I shall see light and eschew darkness, I shall see the way, and avoid wandering, I shall see the truth, and shun error, I shall see life and escape death Illuminate, O illuminate my blind soul, which sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death, and direct my feet in the way of peace.

3 CONFESSION OF SIN AND PRAYER.*

O God of the spirits of all flesh, I lift up mine eyes unto Thee

I have sinned, what shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Preserver of men? If I justify myself, mine own mouth

* In Scripture Language

shall condemn me Behold I am vile, what shall I answer Thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness, according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me

Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not

Thou, O Lord God, art a God full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth Hear me, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, have mercy also upon me and answer me Thou art the Saviour of them that put their trust in Thee.

4 ACCEPTANCE OF CHRISTIANITY

Heavenly Father, Source of all truth, Hearer and Answerer of prayer, I thank Thee for graciously listening to my cry for light and guidance

I desire, O Lord, to embrace the offers of mercy made in Thy word I come before Thee confessing my vile ingratitude for all Thy goodness, the innumerable sins I have committed in thought, word, and deed From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, I am covered with the leprosy of sin, my best actions are like filthy rags

Renouncing all other grounds of hope, I accept the full and free salvation offered through Jesus Christ I trust in Him as my Saviour, I look to Him for pardon Blot out my sins for His sake I look to Him for righteousness Clothe me with His spotless robe, and I shall be unblameable in Thy sight

I thank Thee for the offered aid of Thy Holy Spirit
For the sake of Jesus Christ, fulfil Thine own promise.
May He come and dwell within my heart, uprooting
every thing displeasing in Thy sight, and causing all
holy affections to spring up

Enable me to show my gratitude by giving myself
to Thy service I desire to devote my whole future
life to the promotion of Thy glory and the good of my
country. Give me grace to watch over myself, to set
a holy example, to be a living epistle of Christ, known
and read of all men May it be my meat and drink to
do Thy will , may I seek to glorify Thee on earth, and
to finish the work which Thou hast given me to do.
Graciously accept this humble offering, and grant me
all needed strength for the sake of my Redeemer

5. PRAYER FOR STEADFASTNESS.

Heavenly Father, I bless Thee for enabling me
publicly to renounce idolatry, and profess myself Thy
follower. But, O Lord, I need Thy gracious aid
Even when Jesus Christ was on earth, many went back
and walked no longer with Him. Enable me to con-
tinue Thy faithful servant to my life's end

I shall be exposed to many temptations Ridicule
may await me from companions who scoff at all religion ,
the friends who once welcomed me may close their
doors against me , my dearest relatives, whose affec-
tion would have survived every other shock, may turn
against me

But, oh Lord, my greatest trials will come from my
own heart faith may grow dim , love may wax cold ,
sinful desires which I hoped were rooted out may
spring up again , the cares of the world, the deceit-
fulness of riches, and the lust of other things, may
cause me to fall away from Thee

Deeply conscious of my own weakness, I would cry
to Thee for help Let Thy grace be sufficient for me,

and Thy strength be made perfect in my weakness. Preserve me from the fear of man which bringeth a snare O Saviour, be Thou ever near me Each day may I carry to Thee my distresses and my temptations, may I set Thee ever before me , may I hear Thee saying to me, Son, thou art ever with me , I will never leave thee , continue thou in my love , be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life Amen.

6 DEDICATION TO GOD.*

O Lord, my heavenly Father, I desire now humbly to approach Thee, invited by the name of Thy Son, and trusting in His righteousness and grace From my birth I have gone astray from Thee , but in infinite mercy, Thou hast called me, and now I return to Thee, and acknowledge Thy dominion over me O Lord, do Thou receive me , I desire to be Thine for ever

Blessed God ! from this day do I acknowledge Thee only as my Lord, and give up myself to Thy service. All the members of my body, all the powers of my mind, every thing I possess, would I present to Thee this day , accept them I beseech Thee I earnestly pray that Thou wouldest give me strength and courage to do Thy will, to live for Thy glory, and to persevere to the very end of my life

Not only do I set apart all that I am and have to Thy service, but I also submit myself to Thy will I would leave, O Lord, to Thy management and direction all I possess Looking on Thee as the righteous Governor of the universe, may I always be enabled to say "Thy will be done "

Use me, O Lord, I beseech Thee, as an instrument of Thy service Number me among Thine own people. Let my sins be blotted out for the sake of Thy Son Let me be clothed with His righteousness , let me be sanctified by His Spirit , change me more and more

* Partly adapted and abridged from Doddridge

into His image, Let my life be spent in the light
of Thy gracious countenance

And when the solemn hour of death comes, do Thou
then look down with pity, O my heavenly Father,
on Thy dying child, and receive my departing spirit
into Thy heavenly presence, for Jesus Christ's sake.
Amen.

7. THE PRAYER WHICH CHRIST TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name
Thy kingdom come Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever
Amen.

